

OF THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

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VOLUME I

(THE ISLANDS AND THE FIRST EMPIRE)

PART II

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE COMMONWEALTH

(A.D. 1485—1660)

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BOOK III

THE BEGINNING OF THE MODERN AGE: THE
REFORMATION, AND THE OPENING OF
THE SEAS (A.D. 1485-1603)

INTRODUCTION

THE sixteenth century was a turning point in the history of the island peoples, and the events of this century very largely determined the whole course of their future history. It was a fortunate thing that in an age so critical the direction of English affairs fell into the hands of a succession of the ablest princes who have ever occupied the English throne. All the Tudors had great qualities; Henry VIII. and Elizabeth had gifts of a very high order indeed—courage, resolution, imagination, subtlety and daring. They were purely English, and genuinely patriotic. They had an intuitive understanding of their subjects. And for these reasons they were rewarded with a devoted loyalty, which was not shaken even by their manifest failings. They were trusted with a degree of independent power which no English ruler had enjoyed since Edward I., or was ever to enjoy again. Hence their rule has been described as the ‘Tudor despotism.’ But, as we shall see, this phrase is misleading. The Tudors never attempted to overthrow the system of self-government which had been created in England. They ruled through Parliament and the justices of the peace; and were able to get their own way because they were trusted—because their way was, on the whole, the way which the nation desired to follow. Hence England, the most powerful of the four nations, faced the many and grave perils of the new age as a united nation, inspired by a very strong sense of national unity, and under extremely powerful leadership.

There are four main features upon which the student should keep his mind fixed in studying this period.

The first is the growing strength of the tendency towards the unification of the four nations. The complete constitutional union of Wales with England was effected in the reign of Henry VIII. It is the first of the many ‘unions’ which have formed landmarks in the history of the British Commonwealth. The real conquest of Ireland was begun by Henry VIII., and practically completed by Elizabeth, though it was carried out in so unhappy a way as to leave

a heritage of future trouble. Although war between England and Scotland continued to fill the first half of the period, the two countries were gradually drawing together. The Reformation made them partners in a common danger, and the most fortunate of royal marriages prepared the way for the union of the two crowns, which took place in 1603. In 1485 the prospect of unity among the four nations seemed very remote. In 1603 it was practically achieved, never (we may hope) to be broken again.

The second feature of the period is the influence upon the life and institutions of the island peoples of that vast upheaval which is known as the Reformation. Its effects in England, Scotland and Ireland were widely different, partly owing to differences of national character, but mainly owing to the sharply contrasted circumstances of its introduction into each of these countries. In England it was directed and controlled by the monarchy, acting through Parliament; it was predominantly political in character, and drew much of its strength from the sentiment of national independence; it ended in a characteristically English compromise; and it turned the Church into a sort of department of the State. In Scotland it was carried out from below, in the teeth of royal opposition, and, although it was deeply affected by political factors, it rested far more upon popular enthusiasm than it ever did in England. For that reason it took an extreme and a democratic form. The Scots became a nation deeply versed in the knotty problems of theology, and therefore intellectually acute. They obtained also, in the Presbyterian form of Church government, a training in self-government which their political institutions had never given them. In short, the Reformation affected the Scottish people far more deeply than the English. It remoulded their national character, and altered the course of their destiny. In Ireland the Reformation came as a challenge forced upon the people from without by a very cruel conqueror. It therefore achieved no victory, but only added to the existing evils of the country.

The third feature of the period is the part played by the island peoples, and especially by the English, in the common life of Europe. It was in this period that European history began to be, what it has continued to be ever since, a story of the rivalry of consolidated Nation-States for leadership or dominion. And the policy of England now began to be fixed on the lines which it has followed ever

since. It was the policy of abstaining from any attempt to secure dominion on the Continent, because the Hundred Years' War had shown the futility of any such enterprise, but at the same time of preventing any single power from attaining a position of overwhelming supremacy. This is the policy of Balance of Power; and it has led England (and later Britain and the whole British Commonwealth) to resist to the utmost every attempt on the part of any single power to attain world-supremacy. There have been four such attempts in modern history, and in resisting each the islands have taken a leading part. The first of these attempts was that of Spain, and it falls into this period. Its culmination was the defeat of the Armada.

The fourth feature of the period was the opening of the seas, and the beginning of those overseas adventures of the islanders which were to lead in the long run to the creation of the world-wide British Commonwealth. These events were vital for our whole story. The first stage, covering the later years of the fifteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth, was marked by the great explorations, mainly due to Spain and Portugal, which revealed to Europe the vast lands of the East and West, but left all these inexhaustible resources to be enjoyed as a monopoly by the two powers which had mainly discovered them. The second stage, covering the second half of the sixteenth century, was marked by the growing boldness of English sailors in challenging this monopoly, first by piratical raids or by attempts to discover new sea-routes, and finally by open war. Here, again, the culmination of the story was to be found in the defeat of the Spanish Armada. This momentous struggle, which was one of the turning points in the world's history, broke the monopoly of Spain. It opened the seas of the world not only to English sailors and traders, but to the sailors and traders of all nations. It established for the first time the Freedom of the Seas. And it made possible the creation of overseas settlements by the island peoples. With the extremely doubtful exception of Newfoundland, no oversea settlement had yet been made when the period ended in 1603. Nevertheless the underground foundations of the world-wide British Commonwealth had been laid; and on these foundations building was to proceed very rapidly in the next age.

CHAPTER I

THE RESTORATION^f OF GOOD GOVERNMENT

(A.D. 1485-1529)

ENGLAND, WALES, IRELAND—Henry VII, 1485: Henry VIII., 1509.
SCOTLAND—James IV., 1488: James V., 1513.

§ I. *The Privy Council and the Re-establishment of Order.*

AFTER the battle of Bosworth Henry VII.¹ was faced by the dull but vitally important task of restoring order and good government after the anarchy of the previous century. The task was no easy one, for the habit of turbulence was deeply rooted. Men of all ranks bore arms, and used them too readily. Restless northern gentlemen of the Yorkist faction eager for a change of government, London workmen or apprentices indignant at the favours shown to German or Italian foreigners, Cornish miners and farmers who saw no reason why they should be taxed for wars on the Scottish border—all were too quick to try to remedy their own grievances by force. 'There is no country in the whole world,' said a Venetian observer, 'where there are so many thieves and robbers as in England, insomuch that few venture to go alone in the country except in the middle of the day, and fewer still in the towns at night, and least of all in London.' That was the result of a century of disorder: the habit of accepting the Reign of Law, and of trusting to the law for the redress of grievances, had been terribly undermined. It had to be restored before England could resume her interrupted progress, and it could only be restored by firm government.

Henry VII.'s task was made easier by the fact that the great nobles, whose lawlessness and whose bands of armed retainers had been the chief source of disorder, had almost destroyed one another. In Henry VII.'s first Parliament only twenty-seven lay peers were summoned to attend the

¹ There is a life of Henry VII. by James Gairdner in the Twelve English Statesmen Series.

House of Lords.¹ Under these circumstances it was possible to carry out effectively the prohibition of 'livery and maintenance' for which Parliament had so often and so vainly asked. On the other hand, although many of the knightly class were still unruly, the bulk of the nation, the country squires and merchants who filled the House of Commons, and the workmen and peasants in town and country, desired nothing so much as good government, and were very ready to see the king's authority strengthened as a means of maintaining it.

Henry VII. had been raised to the throne practically by a coalition of the Lancastrians with the many Yorkists who were disgusted by the iniquities of Richard III. His marriage to Elizabeth, the daughter and heiress of Edward IV., was part of the arrangement, and it was hoped that this marriage would put an end to the long dynastic strife. But it takes a turbulent country a long time to settle down, once the habit of obedience to the law has been unsettled; and the first twelve years of the reign were full of plots, riots and fighting. Henry had taken the precaution of locking up in the Tower the young Earl of Warwick, who was the only direct male representative of the Yorkist line; this unfortunate youth remained in prison for fourteen years, until, in 1499, he was executed on a trumped-up charge as the only means of putting an end to the Yorkist plots. But his imprisonment did not deter the defeated faction. They put forward impostors—Lambert Simnel (1486-7), the son of an Oxford tradesman, who pretended to be the Earl of Warwick, and Perkin Warbeck (1492-7), the son of a Flemish boatman, who pretended to be Richard, Duke of York, the younger of the princes whom Richard III. had murdered in the Tower. Both gave Henry much trouble; but while Simnel got some support from the surviving Yorkist nobles in England, and was able to fight at Stoke (1487), a battle which practically destroyed the Yorkist party, Warbeck had few English followers, and was easily defeated and captured when he tried a landing; he depended wholly upon the support of the great Yorkists in Ireland, upon the help of Edward IV.'s sister, the Dowager Duchess of Burgundy, and upon the aid of Scotland; and he spent nearly all the years of his notoriety in wandering from court to court. There were other conspirators also, but they need not trouble us. From 1487 onwards Henry

¹ Not more than six of these are directly represented in the peerage of the twentieth century.

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vii.'s throne was quite secure, though the conspiracies (of which Warbeck's was the most serious) worried him from time to time, and especially influenced his foreign policy.

The main work of this king was, indeed, the restoration of efficient government, and his main instrument in this work was his Privy Council, which he filled, not, like his predecessors, with great nobles, but with hard-working practical administrators, churchmen, knights and lawyers. Henceforward this very assiduous and industrious body was the real centre and heart of the government of England, and its very willing local agents were the Justices of the Peace, unpaid gentlemen of the country, who were proud to be the king's helpers in restoring good government and repressing disorder. That was the essence of the Tudor system: government by the Privy Council, acting through the justices, and all under the real control of the king; and for a long time it worked admirably. In the Litany of the English Church (which comes down to us from the Tudor age), the 'Lords of the Council' and the 'Magistrates' (that is, the justices of the peace) are the only ~~king~~ ^{judicial} authorities for whom special petitions are offered; Parliament is very significantly omitted.

For Parliament no longer presumed to control the ordinary course of government, as it had attempted to do in the time of Richard II. and Henry IV. This was mainly because it was no longer itself under the influence of great nobles, as it had been in those days, and therefore was no longer used by a faction out of power as an instrument for attacking the faction in power. It was more than content to leave full power and responsibility for the execution of the laws in the hands of the king and his chosen councillors, and to confine itself to what was held to be its own proper business—the making of laws and the voting of taxes. Even in these spheres it was willing to go far to meet the wishes of a king whom it could trust. To Henry VII. and his successors it voted substantial revenues for life; and it made generous response when asked for special grants for special needs. But this did not mean that Parliament had abdicated its powers; on the contrary, Henry VII. and his successors knew that they would have trouble if they allowed themselves to get seriously out of touch with the feelings of the nation, and it was only because they were tactful and popular monarchs, whose policy was generally approved, that they got so much of their own way. They did not summon Parliament so frequently

as it had been summoned in the Lancastrian period; Henry VII. summoned it only three times in the last ten years of his reign, and Henry VIII. went without a meeting for eight years (1515-1523). But nobody resented this, so long as the government was efficient and successful: attendance at Parliament was indeed a costly burden from which men were glad to escape. And the Tudor kings were wise enough not to attempt to override the legal privileges of Parliament, either in taxation or in legislation. Thus, though Parliament fell into the background during this period, it did so largely by its own consent, because it trusted the king and his council; but all its legal powers remained unaffected, and on the questions about which its members felt they were entitled to speak, such as the state of the Church, or the needs of trade, or the problems of agriculture and labour, or, above all, the burden of taxation, Parliament repeatedly showed that it was very much alive, and could not be easily overridden.

It was, then, the king and his council who formed the real centre of the government of England throughout this period, and not Parliament. And the main work of the council was to bring the forces of disorder under control. For this purpose they very strictly prohibited the maintenance of armed bands by even the greatest nobles. And as the ordinary law courts had been proved to be too weak to exercise adequate control over the great men and their followers, the council obtained from Parliament in 1487 special jurisdiction to deal with such cases, and with all instances of improper interference with the ordinary course of law. Practically the Act of 1487 set up a new court, closely connected and sometimes almost identical with the Privy Council, and known as the Court of Star Chamber. Its powers were not strictly defined, and its procedure was not bound by pedantic usages. It served an invaluable purpose in re-establishing the Reign of Law, and thoroughly deserved the popularity which it continued to enjoy until, under the Stewart kings, its jurisdiction, being no longer needed, began to seem oppressive.

One of Henry VII.'s main objects was the acquisition of a substantial revenue, such as should save him from the dependence upon Parliament which had weakened his predecessors; and this was wholly in accordance with the desires of Parliament itself, which disliked having to vote taxes, and still clung to the idea that so far as possible 'the king should live of his own.' The wholesale confiscation

of great estates which had resulted from the Wars of the Roses greatly enriched the Crown, and an enactment of Henry's first Parliament rescinding all alienations of royal lands since 1454 ensured that Henry should reap the full benefit of the confiscations. With these resources and the other traditional revenues of the Crown he was able, by economical management, easily to cover the ordinary expenses of government without recourse to special taxation. In the later years of the reign, when the love of money gained upon him, he allowed a great deal of unjust and even illegal exaction to be carried on in his name, especially by the notorious Empson and Dudley, two hard-working and unscrupulous members of the Privy Council. When Henry VII. died he had not only restored order, he had accumulated a great treasure, said to have amounted to four and a half millions of pounds—an immense sum for that age.

§ 2. *The Splendour of Henry VIII. and Wolsey.*

Thus his brilliant successor, Henry VIII.,¹ began his reign (1509) as the wealthiest prince in Europe, and was able to play a splendid part, such as his heart desired. Henry VIII. was perhaps the most arresting personality in the whole long line of English kings. He was, according to the Venetian ambassador, 'as handsome as Nature could form him,' and full of strength and animal spirits. He was as good an archer as any of the yeomen of his guard, a skilful wrestler, a splendid horseman, and a lover of all field sports. Withal, though blunt and masterful, he was very good-natured and easily approachable. Such a figure was sure of universal popularity, and 'Bluff King Hal' kept the warm affections of his subjects even during the darkest episodes of his reign. But he was also a highly cultivated man; could play 'on almost every instrument,' and composed jolly ballad tunes, as well as religious music; could speak several languages; and was very well read, especially in theology. In short, he was as well equipped intellectually as physically, and earned the respect of scholars and musicians equally with that of sportsmen and soldiers. With all his joviality, he never forgot his royal dignity. No one ever dared to take liberties with him. He had a very proud and high spirit, and an immense self-confidence; and even his most trusted ministers, even a Wolsey or a Cromwell,

¹ There is a good illustrated life of Henry VIII. by A. F. Pollard.

always knew that the king was master, however much latitude he might allow them, and that he was neither to be cozened nor bullied into any course of action that he did not like. Above all, Henry was a thorough Englishman; and he had an instinctive understanding of his fellow-countrymen's ideas and desires. What wonder that a king so splendid and so masterful, and withal so rich, should have the complete loyalty of his subjects, and be allowed to do almost as he pleased, and to lead them into strange courses! Never has England been nearer to absolute monarchy than under this brilliant and masterful king. Yet even Henry VIII. never dreamt of overriding or disregarding Parliament. He did not need to do so, because Parliament was cheerfully pliant to his will, and gave its assent to even his most tyrannical acts. The reign of Henry VIII. thus completed the work of Henry VII., by bringing back all England into cheerful obedience to its government, and by raising that government high above all rivalry from nobles or other discontented elements.

Young, rich, handsome, and full of the joy of life, Henry VIII. was determined to enjoy himself, and to play a splendid part in the exciting drama of European politics. He was content, during the first twenty years of his reign, to leave the detailed business of government in the hands of his servants, and especially of the great Cardinal Wolsey,¹ the son of an Ipswich grazier, whose immense abilities had led him from promotion to promotion, until, from 1515 to 1529, he obtained practically complete control of all the business of the country, at home and abroad. Archbishop of York, Chancellor of England, Cardinal and Papal Legate, Wolsey seemed to control at once State and Church, while the king enjoyed himself with jousts, dancing, hunting, pageantry, and the excitements of foreign campaigns. 'The Cardinal is about forty-six years old,' wrote the Venetian ambassador in 1519, 'very handsome, learned, extremely eloquent, of vast ability, and indefatigable. He alone transacts the same business as that which occupies all the magistracies, offices and councils of Venice. He is thoughtful, and has the reputation of being extremely just; he favours the people exceedingly, especially the poor, hearing their suits and seeking to despatch them instantly.' He maintained a splendour of life equal to the greatness of his power, with a household of five hundred persons,

¹ There is a life of Wolsey by Bishop Creighton in the *Twelve English Statesmen Series*.

noblemen and knights, stalwart yeomen and grooms in crimson velvet liveries, pages, minstrels, and choirs of singing-boys.

It is worth while to dwell for a moment upon this proud and gorgeous figure of the Cardinal. He was the last great churchman-minister in English history, for after him came the deluge. And beyond a doubt the impressive splendours of the gallant king and his superb minister touched the imagination of the English, and did much to establish the ascendancy of the national government over their minds, and to exalt the spirit of national pride. It is no wonder that such a king and such a minister should be allowed a very free hand in the conduct of national affairs, especially as, on the whole, they did their work extremely well. But even Henry VIII. and Wolsey had to learn that there were limits to what is called the 'subservience' of Tudor Parliaments. Their chief interest, as we shall see, was in foreign policy, with which on the whole Parliament did not presume to meddle. Yet in the Parliament of 1523, when large supplies for a war against France were demanded, there was a striking display of independence. One member—afterwards famous as Thomas Cromwell—ventured to make a strong speech against the whole war policy. The debates lasted for seventeen days. Parliament granted much smaller supplies than were demanded. And when the Cardinal, with his glittering train, came down to browbeat them into submission, he was met with courteous obstinacy. There was even some talk of refusing him admission. When he demanded explanations of their conduct from the members, all remained silent; and at last the Speaker, Sir Thomas More, explained that it was not in accordance with the privileges of the Commons to debate their decisions with strangers. Parliament was not going to be browbeaten, or to abandon a jot or tittle of its rights; and Wolsey had to go away discomfited. Here is a convincing proof that the quiescence of Parliament had its limits; and it was only by recognising these limits that even the popular Tudor sovereigns were able to wield their power without restraint.

§ 3. *Growing National Strength.*

In the domestic history of England during the long period from 1485 to 1529, there are few outstanding events that call for notice; it was, as we have said, a period of settle-

ment and preparation. But in several ways the events of this period have a very important bearing on the future.

In the first place, a few burnings and imprisonments showed that Lollardy and dissatisfaction with the condition of the Church were still alive, though no longer so widespread as they once had been ; while several episodes showed that suspicion and hostility against the Church were very easily aroused.

The second noteworthy feature of this period was a growing expression of discontent with the changes which were taking place in agriculture. Because of the wealth to be derived from the wool-trade, owners of land had long been tending to substitute sheep-farming for tillage ; and this brought about in some districts the break-up of the old system of communal cultivation by the bringing together of scattered strips into more solid enclosed blocks. It also tempted great landlords to enclose areas of the common or waste land which had hitherto been used by all the cultivators of the manor. And as less labour was required for sheep-farming than for tillage this process threw many men out of work, and led to an increase of vagabondage. The process had not yet gone far ; it did not reach its height until the middle of the century, after the suppression of the monasteries, and even then the greater part of the land was unaffected by it. But it was already attracting notice, and leading to repeated complaints in Parliament and to attempts at legislation, as early as the reign of Henry VII. Thus the two chief sources of trouble which were to engage the attention of England later in the century, the religious question and the agrarian question, were already emerging.

A third feature of the period was the systematic encouragement of English manufacture, commerce and shipping, for which Henry VII. in especial deserves the highest credit. He made a series of commercial treaties for the encouragement of English trade, and his foreign policy was much influenced by this consideration. The most important of his treaties was the *Magnus Intercursus* of 1496, whereby mutual privileges of trade were exchanged between Englishmen and Flemings. It was followed in 1506 by a treaty so favourable to the English merchants that the Flemings called it the *Malus Intercursus*, or Evil Traffic. There were also disputes with the Germans of the Hanseatic League, who had so long dominated English trade, and had enjoyed a specially privileged position, but who now saw English merchants invading their special preserves in Norway and

the Baltic. The controversy reached no decision; but Henry VII.'s declaration that 'our subjects must be as free in all places belonging to the Hanse towns as the Hanse merchants are in England,' shows that the new strong government was anxious to use its power to support English trade, and that the days of complete foreign ascendancy were over. One of Henry VII.'s chief preoccupations was to develop English shipping as rapidly as possible. He gave bounties for the building of large ships, and attempted to limit various branches of foreign trade to English ships.

Lastly, this period may be said to have seen the real foundation of the Royal Navy. Hitherto, though English kings had possessed a few ships, they had mainly trusted to the commandeering of merchant vessels for the purposes of war. It was Henry VIII. who first began systematically to build royal war-vessels, in order to secure the command of the Narrow Seas for his continental wars; and perhaps the year 1512 may be taken as marking the date when for the first time a permanent war fleet guarded the English seas.

In all ways, then, England emerged from this period of settlement stronger, and ready to play a great part. She had got rid of internal turbulence and disorder. She had a powerful and respected government, fully in touch with national feeling. She was rich, and growing steadily more prosperous. Her increasing mercantile marine was showing itself a serious competitor of the older mercantile powers. Her war fleet dominated the seas about her coasts.

§ 4. *England and her Sister Realms.*

In regard to the relations between England and her sister realms the period was one of beginnings, but not yet of achievements.

In *Ireland* the support given by the nobility to each of the Yorkist pretenders in turn made it obvious that something must be done to re-establish the royal authority. But in fact Ireland was in such a state of chaos that a complete reconquest was necessary. 'There be sixty counties inhabited by the king's Irish enemies,' said a rather prejudiced English observer in 1516, 'where reigneth more than sixty chief captains, that liveth only by the sword, and obeyeth to no temporal person save only to himself that is strong; and there be thirty of the English noble folk that followeth the same order, and keepeth the same

rule.' Even within the narrow limits of the Pale, there was little order ; and its affairs were generally controlled by the powerful Earl of Kildare, whose own lands lay partly within and partly outside its limits. To restore order and establish authority in Ireland would have demanded a great army and a large expenditure of money, which the frugal Henry VII. was not prepared to face. But he could not afford to leave royal authority in Ireland, such as it was, still in the hands of the Yorkist leaders. In 1492, therefore, he deposed Kildare from the deputyship, and tried to make use of the rival family of the Butlers of Ormond¹ to keep the Kildare Fitzgeralds in check. The only result was civil war. It was of no use to ring the changes upon Irish factions.

In 1494 Sir Edward Poynings, a useful and industrious member of the Privy Council, was sent across as deputy with a force of one thousand men and a body of English officials. But Poynings found it impossible to establish the royal authority, with the resources at his command, anywhere outside the Pale. All that he could do was to reorganise and strengthen the government in the four counties of the Pale, which he did with great difficulty. An Irish Parliament summoned at Drogheda adopted voluminous laws for the suppression of private war, the protection of the English colony, and the establishment of closer relations with England. Two of these, known later as 'Poynings' Laws,' were intended to guard against the employment of the Irish Parliament as the instrument of the local ambitions or feuds of the great Anglo-Irish nobles like Kildare. They provided that no Parliament should meet until the king's deputy and the Irish Privy Council had specified the statutes proposed to be enacted, and the king and his English council had approved of them ; and that all earlier English laws should have force in Ireland. Thus the Irish Parliament was made entirely dependent upon the English government. Yet this was not resented by the English colonists in Ireland, who were alone concerned. They regarded these Acts as a protection for themselves against Kildare and his like. For the Irish Parliament was still in such a primitive stage of development that it must depend either upon the king or the nobles ; and of the two, dependence upon the king was better. The Parliament of Drogheda completed its work by attainting Kildare, who was sent over to England, and kept a prisoner for some months.

See map of Ireland, Atlas, Plate 42 (a).

But Henry VII. was not prepared to go on with Poynings' work. It cost too much; the Irish revenues were insufficient to pay even the cost of a garrison. Henry therefore fell back upon the old device, and having (as he hoped) taught Kildare a lesson, he sent him back to rule Ireland once more as deputy. He retained his office, and the old anarchy continued until 1520, when once more an English deputy, the Earl of Surrey, was sent across. But Surrey reported that nothing could be done short of systematic conquest, for which an army of six thousand men would be required, and a systematic policy of English colonisation; and Henry VIII., engrossed in the great wars of Europe, was not prepared to face this programme. After five years of fruitless fighting Surrey was recalled, and once more Ireland was left in chaos; neither subjected, not yet left free to work out a system of government for herself. The Irish question had been opened, but nothing had been done towards its solution.

With *Scotland* also the domestic and foreign policy of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. brought them into very difficult relations. The traditional hostility between England and Scotland, and the traditional alliance between Scotland and France, were as strong as ever; and this meant that Scotland was the natural friend of every pretender to the English crown, and that the outbreak of war between England and France always brought war between England and Scotland. From 1488 to 1513 Scotland was ruled by a king more vigorous and successful than most of his predecessors. But equally with his predecessors James IV. had to fight frequently against baronial conspiracies, often fomented from England, and against the rebellions of Highland and island chieftains. Always in relations with England's enemies, he caused anxiety to Henry VII., who on his side kept up a connexion with some of the traitorous Scottish nobles. In 1491, for example, Henry arranged with one of them to kidnap James and his brother and bring them to England, for £277, 13s. 4d.!

Henry found a better way of dealing with the Scottish question when, in 1502, he gave his daughter Margaret in marriage to James IV. Just one hundred years later, their great-grandson was to unite the two crowns. But the marriage did not bring immediate friendship, and there was constant friction and border fighting during the next years. When in 1511 Henry VIII. joined the great continental alliance against France, known as the Holy League,

James IV. felt himself bound to support his ancient ally by invading England; and he had a further ground of quarrel, in that the fleet which he had been eagerly building was attacked and almost destroyed by the English fleet (1511). In 1513 he invaded Northumberland with the whole force of his kingdom, and, through foolish generalship, was utterly defeated at the battle of Flodden, the most disastrous in the whole gloomy history of Scotland. The king himself, thirteen earls, an archbishop and two bishops, and an unnumbered company of knights and men-at-arms, were left dead on the field. The bitter memory of Flodden echoes through the later history of Scotland, and there is scarcely a family of rank in the Lowlands but counts an ancestor slain in this terrible slaughter, which opened more widely than ever the gulf between the two countries. Worst of all, it brought upon Scotland once more the evils of a minority, and the endless faction fights of the nobility which raged unchecked when a boy-king reigned. James V. was only escaping from tutelage when our period closes (1529); in the previous year the burning of Patrick Hamilton for Lutheran heresy marked the beginning of the Scottish Reformation, and a new era opened in the relations of the two nations.

[H. A. L. Fisher's *History of England from the Accession of Henry VII. to the death of Henry VIII.* is the best modern book on this period; see also Brewer's *Henry VIII.*, and Pollard's *Factors in Modern History*; for Scotland, see Hume Brown's or Andrew Lang's *History of Scotland*; for economic history see Meredith's *Economic History of England*, and Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*. There are two excellent lectures on the period in Stubbs' *Lectures on Modern History*.]

CHAPTER II

THE RENASCENCE

§ 1. *The Meaning of the Renaissance.*

WHILE the islands were plunged into anarchy and disorganisation during the fifteenth century, there had been blossoming, in Italy first, and in a less degree in other parts of Western Europe, that efflorescence of literary and artistic activity which is called the Renaissance, or re-birth. The name expresses what has always been felt about this wonderful outburst—that it marked a turning-point in human history. One of the greatest results of the re-establishment of peace and order in England (and in a less degree in Scotland and Ireland) was that it gave a chance for the ideas of the Renaissance to begin to work freely in the islands.

In one way the name 'Renaissance' is unfortunate; it suggests that there had been intellectual sterility or deadness during the Middle Ages, which is far indeed from being the truth. Nor is it right to suppose that the great change in men's thinking and in their way of looking at the world came suddenly. It used to be the fashion to give the date of 1453 for the beginning of the Renaissance, because in that year many Greek scholars, driven from Constantinople when that city fell before the Turks, took refuge in Italy, and stimulated the study of the Greek classics. But this is a very shallow way of regarding a vast movement. It is true that a revival of classical learning had a great deal to do with the birth of the new ideas. But the Greek classics were being studied long before 1453; and there were many other factors in the Renaissance besides the revived study of Greek. The truth is that the beginnings of the Renaissance can be traced far back into the Middle Ages. It was already very active in the fourteenth century; and a great change in men's outlook was already coming about. The enthusiasm of the fifteenth century for Greek studies only gave a special direction to the movement, and the reason why it produced such great

results was that men had been prepared by earlier developments to appreciate what the Greek classics had to teach them.

The most essential feature of the Renaissance was the wide diffusion of a new way of looking at the world and at life, which formed a sharp reaction against the conceptions that had dominated the best men in the Middle Ages. This reaction would have come about in any case, and had long been preparing: the revival of classical learning brought it to a head by emphasising the sharpness of the contrast between the outlook of the ancient world and that of the mediæval world. The scholars of the Middle Ages had studied the classics; but they had interpreted them in the light of their own ideas. The scholars of the fifteenth century tried to understand what the ancients had really felt and thought about life and the world. They tried to look at things with the eyes of Sophocles and Plato; and in proportion as they succeeded in doing so, they were driven to realise that in the brilliant and noble civilisation of the ancient world the governing ideas of men had been widely different from those of the Middle Ages. The Greek view of life (as they understood it) attracted and fascinated the Italians of the fifteenth century so completely, that it hastened the change of outlook which was already beginning, and gave to it a special character. Greek studies seemed the key to a new view of the world, and for a time nothing else seemed worthy of attention. All Italy went mad about them. Princes lavished their treasures on the purchase of manuscripts. A knowledge of Greek was the surest passport to honour, and even to high office. And when we reflect what a marvellous and beautiful civilisation that of ancient Greece had been, it is not surprising that the full revelation of it should have dazzled men's eyes.

Wherein lay the main contrast between the ideas of the Middle Ages and the ideas of ancient Greece, which exercised so exciting an influence upon thinking men? The best men of the Middle Ages thought of the world as a place of struggle and of discipline in preparation for another world: the Greeks thought of it as a place of wonder and beauty, which ought to be explored and enjoyed, and they thought little and vaguely about the idea of another world. The preachers of the Middle Ages were apt to regard the beauties of the physical universe as snares for the soul, and man's body as the source of evils and temptations which might lead him to destruction unless he kept it in

subjection: the Greeks thought of the human body as a noble and beautiful thing which ought to be cultivated so that it might be a worthy temple to enshrine man's yet more marvellous mind; they thought of man's capacity for the enjoyment of beauty as something that ought to be trained and made the most of. The mediæval mind thought of truth—the only truth that mattered—as something that was communicated to men by God through His Church, and regarded man's reason as a very imperfect instrument, which ought to be distrusted and condemned if ever it should dare to challenge or question the revealed truth of which the Church was the guardian: the Greeks thought of truth as something that could only be attained by the free and fearless exercise of man's reason, the noblest and the most divine of all his wonderful gifts. For the best minds of the Middle Ages the highest duty of man was to conquer his passions and to subordinate his arrogant will to the will of God by obeying the rules of life set forth by God's Church; for the Greeks a man's highest duty was to make the most of himself, and to develop all his powers of mind and body in the most harmonious way, so that he might enjoy the beauty of the world and be able to seek for truth. To put the contrast in a single phrase, self-repression was the highest ideal of the mediæval world, self-expression of the ancient world. In reality the contrast between the two views of life was not so sharp as these phrases make it appear. Many great men in the Middle Ages revered beauty as an expression of God; and all the best Greeks emphasised the obligation of self-discipline and self-restraint far more strongly than the men of the Renaissance generally realised. But the contrast was a real one; and it is not wonderful that the revelation of a conception of life so attractive as that of the Greeks, and so different from that which had long been accepted, should have had an intoxicating effect upon men's minds, and should have led to an extravagant insistence upon the supreme value and significance of man's reason and his powers, and of the alluring beauty of the world.

The name of 'Humanism' has been given to this tendency to emphasise the dignity and worth of man. It is a useful word, though an ugly one; its significance is best realised if we think of it largely as a protest against what we may call the 'Divinism' (to use a still uglier word) of the Middle Ages. There is truth in both views, as the best Greeks well knew, and as many 'Humanists' of the

Renaissance period, like Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, knew equally well ; but in the excitement of a new revelation most men were apt to be carried off their balance.

The new spirit stimulated men to marvellous deeds, and especially brought about a wonderful outburst of artistic creation, in Italy first, and later and more faintly in other countries of the West. This is not the place for any description of the marvellous work of Italian painters, sculptors and architects in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries which was the outcome of the impassioned worship of beauty characteristic of the age ; nor can we stop to dwell upon the new movements in literature, the new thought in politics and philosophy, the new speculations in physical science, to which the proud trust in the power of men's reason gave birth. In every field the stimulus was felt. The Reformation in religion was one outcome of the Renaissance ; the great explorations which we shall describe in a later chapter were another. Everywhere there was a ferment of ideas. And, by a happy chance, one of the most epoch-making of mechanical inventions came just at the right moment to encourage the wide diffusion of the new ideas : Gutenberg and Fust invented printing in the middle of the fifteenth century ; and soon the classics were available for all readers, and the pregnant new ideas of the Renaissance were everywhere spread abroad.

§ 2 *The Renaissance in England.*

The printing-press reached England before the influence of the new thought had had time to exercise much influence in the islands. William Caxton, a London trader, brought over a press from the Netherlands in 1476, and set it up at Westminster ; and his services to English thinking were of real importance. Caxton was no mere mechanic. He was a man of letters as well as a practical business man, and he made himself the centre of the dawning intellectual life of England during the reigns of Edward IV., Richard III. and Henry VII. Perhaps his greatest service was that he did not content himself with printing learned works in Latin, but issued a long series of translations of notable works into English ; and in doing so did much to standardise the rich and flexible English tongue, and to prepare the way for the great era which was to come. He had the patronage of the most enlightened nobles of the time. One of them, Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, had studied in

Italy, and was a master of the best learning of his age. Tiptoft was an example of that strange combination of high intellectual interests with extraordinary brutality which, as we shall see, was characteristic of the Renaissance age: even amid the barbarities of the Wars of the Roses he earned the title of 'the Butcher'.

But it was not until the last years of the fifteenth century that the influence of Greek studies and of the Italian Renaissance reached England, and not until very much later that it reached Scotland or Ireland. In 1488 Thomas Linacre came back from Italy fired with enthusiasm for the learning of the Greeks, and on the basis of Greek learning started in England the scientific study of medicine. Three years later his friend William Grocyn, an Oxford scholar, went to Italy to study, and on his return became the centre of Greek studies at Oxford. A little later John Colet, an earnest and eloquent priest, followed in his footsteps, and began, also at Oxford, to apply the study of Greek to the interpretation of the New Testament, brushing away the cobwebs of scholastic interpretation and trying to get at what St. Paul had really meant. The Oxford group attracted to England the greatest scholar of the age, the young Dutchman, Erasmus, who spent many years and made many friends in England, and Erasmus, like Colet, cared most of all to use his learning as a means of purifying men's thoughts about religion and stimulating a 'Renaissance' in the Church. And in London all the group found a friend in the young lawyer Thomas More,¹ the noblest of them all, who, like the rest, was concerned to use his knowledge to bring about reforms in Church and State.

What we have said about the little group who were the real parents of the English Renaissance illustrates a marked contrast between the form which the Renaissance at first assumed in England and that which it had assumed in Italy. The English Renaissance was as yet far less brilliant in its artistic achievement: the only great painter who was working in England in these years was the German Holbein; and the wonderful literary efflorescence which was the crown of the English Renaissance did not come until the time of Elizabeth. But the forerunners of the movement in England were deeply concerned about practical and moral issues, which in Italy counted for relatively little.

¹ More's son-in-law, W. Roper, wrote a beautiful little biography of him, which ought to be read.

In none of them was this more clearly shown than in the gentle and noble More. His greatest book (1516), the finest product of the first stage of the Renaissance in England, was an earnest criticism of social and political ills, and a glowing picture of an imaginary world in which these ills should disappear. *Utopia*¹ (or Nowhere) is, under the semblance of a description of a State in the newly discovered land of America, at once a criticism of the present and a dream for the future; and it is so tender and so wise that it can still inspire. It was an attempt to think out how the State could be made to yield the greatest amount of happiness to its citizens; and in three respects it was far indeed beyond its age. This noble and tender spirit deplored the fact that the poor lay always at the mercy of the rich, and suffered from their oppression: he comforted himself by imagining a State in which all men had enough, and the desire for possessions was no longer the governing motive of men. He hated religious bitterness and persecution, since (being himself a deeply religious man) he felt that religion ought to be the teacher of mercy and love; so he imagined a society in which there was complete toleration of religious differences. He knew the enrichment of life that came from knowledge, and lamented the ignorance in which the mass of men still lived; in his *Nowhere* all children were wisely trained at the public charge.

More was a personal friend of Henry VIII., who delighted in his wit, his high spirits, and his wide learning; for Henry himself was essentially a man of the Renaissance, and a master of the culture of his age. Unhappily the spirit of More and his group was far beyond the apprehension of the full-blooded, self-willed king. Yet Henry and his great minister, the cardinal, were in sympathy with the demand for greater enlightenment; and in their time many schools, inspired by the ideals of the new learning, began to arise. Wolsey himself founded a great college (Christ Church) at Oxford, and a school at his native Ipswich. The schools of the new learning which arose during the next generation were to be the training-grounds of the poets and sailors and thinkers of the great Elizabethan age, and of the political reformers of the age which followed. Perhaps the most famous of these schools was that which Colet established in connexion with St. Paul's Cathedral, when he was appointed its Dean.

¹ *Utopia* was written in Latin, but there are English translations.

§ 3. *Moral and Political Aspects of the Renaissance.*

It would be a great blunder to suppose that the earnest and lofty spirit of More and his friends was characteristic of the Renaissance movement either in England or elsewhere. For the brilliant achievements of the age had dark shadows; and the darkest of these was a grave relaxation of moral standards, a sort of moral anarchy. This was the natural result of the sudden casting off of old restraints and old ideals of conduct, of the worship of human individuality, and of the claim that every man had a right to develop his own personality unrestrained. Read such a self-revelation as the *Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*, a typical Renaissance artist, and a naturally honest and generous-minded man, and you will see what sins the worship of beauty and strength could appear to cover: Cellini feels that no apology is necessary for vices in which his temperament led him to indulge, or for crimes into which he was led by self-will. The very definition of *virtu* among the Italians of this age found no place for what we call the higher moral qualities: the man of *virtu* is the man who can by craft and courage impose his will upon stubborn clay or bronze, or upon the still more stubborn human material presented by his neighbours or his subjects. Henry VIII. and Thomas Cromwell were, indeed, far more typically Renaissance men than John Colet and Thomas More.

This aspect of the Renaissance spirit, this disregard of moral restraints, this passionate egoism, found its most unhappy expression in the sphere of politics. The records of the petty princes of Italy in this age are full of incredible instances of brilliant, ruthless, non-moral cunning and cruelty in the pursuit of power. Rulers learnt to regard themselves as exempt from all moral restraints, and the ideal prince seemed to be a sort of tiger-man, strong, pitiless and cunning, using every device of force and fraud without scruple or misgiving, to impose his will upon subjects or rivals. This view of statecraft is set forth with extraordinary skill in Machiavelli's *Prince* (1513), one of the classics of the age. The assumption upon which the whole treatise rests is that morality has practically no bearing upon politics. And Machiavelli's doctrine was in fact simply a translation into theory of the practice of the age. Not the Italian princes only, but such sovereigns as Ferdinand of Aragon or Francis I. of France held themselves exempt from moral restraints, and acted on the assumption that morals have nothing to do with the

relations of States with one another, or of princes with their subjects, but that ultimately force and cunning are the only determining factors. This was, in effect, the political doctrine of the Renaissance, of the period when absolute monarchy was everywhere establishing itself, and when monarchs were refusing to admit the right of any power to control or criticise their actions. It is a doctrine which has ever since had advocates, down to the time when the teachings of Treitschke dominated the mind of Germany in the generation before the Great War. And the almost universal acceptance of this view ought to be remembered when we judge the action of Henry VIII. and Thomas Cromwell, or of Elizabeth.

In politics, as in other respects, the Renaissance was in fact a reaction against the ideas of the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages had always held in theory (though theory was often contradicted by practice) that there must be in the world some power charged with the duty of enforcing the moral law of God upon all princes, and they had found this power in the theoretical position of the Emperors, and in the real authority of the Popes. The governments of the Renaissance age—even those which remained Catholic—repudiated every claim to restrain or control their action, and in effect repudiated the validity for them of the moral law. But it was only for a time that this attitude was triumphant. Even in the sixteenth century, since man is a moral animal and even absolute monarchs are men, the instincts of decency prevented the worst excesses. And soon the old doctrine, the old ideal of a moral law above the authority of all governments, began to raise its head again, we shall see it emerging in the form of a system of international law, early in the seventeenth century. Generation by generation it has grown in strength, and it will be part of our business, in later parts of this book, to note its growth and to trace the part which has been played in its progress, either consciously or unconsciously, by the British Commonwealth.

In the meanwhile it must be remembered that throughout the great age with which we are now dealing the spirit of the Renaissance, blended of good and evil, was working like yeast in the rapidly changing world.

[Burkhardt *The Renaissance*, Symonds *Short History of the Renaissance in Italy*, Seeböhm *The Oxford Reformers*, Hutton *Life of More*. The best English edition of Machiavelli's *Prince* is edited by L. A. Burd, with an introduction by Lord Acton. Macaulay has an essay on Machiavelli, and a lecture on the Renaissance is included in Lord Acton's *Lectures on Modern History*.]

CHAPTER III

THE NEW ERA IN FOREIGN POLITICS

(A.D. 1485-1529)

§ 1. *The Beginning of National Rivalries : the Wars of Italy.*

ONE of the distinguishing features of the Modern Age has been that it has been filled with the rivalries of great organised States for influence and leadership in Europe. In this prolonged struggle every State, great or small, has been more or less involved ; every controversy breaking out in any corner of Europe has appeared to concern all governments, because it might affect the 'Balance of Power' ; there has been a long succession of wars, involving nearly always a number of the powers ; and the intervals of peace have been filled with restless, suspicious, and often unscrupulous diplomacy. The date commonly taken for the beginning of this inter-State rivalry is the year 1494, when Charles VIII. of France made a sudden raid into Italy, and promptly found himself faced by a combination of other powers, led by the now united kingdom of Spain.

In this long rivalry England, and in a less degree Scotland, were necessarily involved, though owing to their insular position they have not usually been so deeply involved as the continental powers. But the fortunes of the islands have been very deeply affected by this unceasing European strife. Their participation in the fray has been influenced by various motives : frequently by the ancient hostility between England and France ; frequently by anxiety as to the fate of the Netherlands, which look across to England, and in some degree control the North Sea traffic ; sometimes by sympathy with causes which were being fought for on the Continent—the cause of Protestantism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the causes of national freedom and popular government in the nineteenth. Once the old mediæval ambition for conquest in France was fairly abandoned, England has never (unlike the continental powers) desired to make territorial conquests on the mainland. But always, from a very early stage in this

prolonged strife, it has been a primary aim of British policy to prevent any single power from obtaining complete dominion in Europe; and it has been at the moments when such a dominion seemed to be threatening that the interventions of the island peoples in European affairs have been most vigorous and effective. In this sense, but only in this sense, England first, and then united Britain, and then the British Empire, have always stood for what is called the Balance of Power. The importance of the period upon which we are now entering is that it sees the definite abandonment of the old dreams of French conquest, and the entry of England upon what was to become the special British policy of the Balance of Power.

The transition, like all transitions, took place gradually. Henry VII. fought a rather aimless and half-hearted war with France (1488-92), which recalls the old mediæval policy. His object was to preserve the independence of Brittany, the last great feudal State in France. But he willingly let himself be bought off by the treaty of Etaples (1492), thus showing that he did not take his French ambitions seriously. And the fact that in this war he allied himself with Spain and with the Emperor Maximilian shows that the object of the war was rather to check the alarming growth of French power than to acquire French territory.

France was, in fact, manifestly the greatest power in Europe, and her unity was completed by the marriage of Charles VIII. to the heiress of Brittany. Charles now entered upon a career of conquest by putting forward a claim to the kingdom of Naples, which he invaded and conquered in 1494 with surprising ease. But his success brought a formidable coalition into existence against him, including the Pope, Venice, Milan, the Emperor and Spain, and the French rapidly lost their conquests in Southern Italy, which passed for two centuries under the dominion of Spain. Henry VII. joined the anti-French league, but took no part in the fighting. Once again England and Spain were ranged against France; and their alliance was cemented by a treaty of marriage between Catherine of Aragon, daughter of the King of Spain, and Arthur, eldest son of Henry VII. The treaty was concluded in 1497, though the marriage was not celebrated till 1501. Royal marriages played a great part in the foreign politics of the next ten years, and this one was to have momentous consequences. The Spanish alliance was so much valued that when Arthur died, in 1502, a papal

dispensation was obtained to permit his brother Henry to marry the young widow.

But the defeat of the French attack on Naples did not end French ambitions in Italy. In 1499 Louis XII., successor of Charles VIII., again led a French army over the Alps, and occupied the duchy of Milan, which he claimed by inheritance. For some years he maintained possession of his conquest, and in 1509-10 he joined with the Pope, Spain, and the Emperor in an iniquitous attack upon the republic of Venice. But the growing strength of the French was alarming; and in 1511 Pope Julius II. made peace with Venice, and set to work to form a great Holy League to expel the French from Italy. In this league Spain and the Emperor joined, as well as the chief Italian States. The ambitious Henry VIII. now reigned in England, and, being eager to play a great part in the world, he enthusiastically threw himself into the Holy League, and prepared to send English armies into Northern and Southern France. The southern campaign (1512) was a dismal failure. The northern campaign (1513), which was well organised by Wolsey (who thus won the favour of the king), achieved some success, so that Henry VIII. began to dream of conquering or partitioning France. But the anti-French league broke up promptly, as soon as the power of the French in Italy was broken. Henry, convinced that he had been tricked by his father-in-law, the King of Spain, made a profitable peace and alliance with France in 1514, which was sealed by the marriage of Henry's sister, Mary, to Louis XII. Shortlived as it was to be, this was the first instance of an actual alliance between England and France, and it may be said to mark the final abandonment of English ambitions for the conquest of France.

§ 2. *Charles V., Francis I and Solyman the Turk.*

In the following years the European situation began to change very rapidly. In 1515 Francis I. succeeded to the French throne. He was a young and brilliant man, ambitious, artistic, frivolous, superficial, and devoid of all scruples; and Henry VIII. felt towards him an intense personal jealousy which influenced his policy. Francis signalised his advent to the throne by a raid into Italy, where, after the brilliant battle of Marignano, he reconquered the duchy of Milan, to the acute annoyance of Henry, who thought of responding with an invasion of France.

But the circumstances were not favourable. For next year the cunning old fox, Ferdinand of Spain, died, and was succeeded by his grandson Charles, already master of the Netherlands, and heir to his other grandfather, the Emperor Maximilian.

Charles was a grave and shy boy of sixteen, who was thought to be a fool, and seemed to compare poorly with his dazzling rivals, Henry and Francis. He was to show, in a long reign full of troubles, that he had a patience, a courage, and a diplomatic skill which made him a greater figure than either of them. The relations of these three young sovereigns were to form for a generation the most important question in European politics. Their rivalry soon had a chance of showing itself in a curious way. In 1518 the Emperor Maximilian died. His family estates, the Austrian lands of the Habsburgs, passed of course to his grandson, Charles. But his imperial title could only be bestowed by the votes of the German Electors. Charles, Francis and Henry all became candidates for this, the greatest of all earthly dignities. Charles was elected, as was almost inevitable.

And now the Emperor Charles v. stood forth as the ruler of the most extraordinary empire that had ever existed in Europe.¹ As heir to the House of Burgundy, he was master of the Netherlands and their rich and prosperous cities, and of the Franche Comté on the eastern border of France. As heir to his Spanish grandparents, he ruled over the united kingdom of Spain, over the southern part of Italy, and over the vast empire in the New World which Columbus had discovered for Spain, though it had not yet begun to pour out the stream of wealth that afterwards made it so valuable. As heir to the Habsburgs, he was master of Austria and other lands in South-Eastern Germany. As Emperor he had a theoretical title to the obedience of the other German princes. It seemed as if, with these vast resources, he ought to be able at last to give the imperial title a real meaning, to make himself master of Germany, and even of all Europe. The only obstacles that seemed to stand in his way were the French and English monarchies. His own territories almost surrounded France; while England was linked by a traditional alliance to the owner of the Netherlands, and the Queen of England was the Emperor's aunt.

But Charles v.'s strength was more apparent than real.

¹ See the map, Atlas, Plate 8.

His widely scattered dominions had distinct governments and were jealous of one another. Communications between them were interrupted by France on land, and dependent upon the English by sea. Spain was almost ready to rebel during the early years of the reign; the rich Flemish cities were very unruly; the German princes were quite unaccustomed to obedience. And these were by no means the worst of Charles' troubles. In 1517 the Reformation had begun in Germany, and by 1521, when Charles went to that country to try to establish the imperial authority on a firmer foundation, the whole country was already in an uproar. In the Diet of Worms, at which the young Emperor met the magnates of the land, he was confronted by the troublesome monk, Martin Luther, who was the origin of all these turmoils. He laboured in vain to restore the authority of the Church, or even to establish a religious truce: the conflict between the new and the old religions ruined all chance of his becoming master in Germany, and eventually (1552) brought about his downfall.

Finally in these very years the Turkish Empire, under the rule of the most famous of all the sultans, Solyman the Magnificent, was becoming more threatening than it had ever yet been.¹ In 1521 Solyman captured Belgrad, the warden-fortress of the Danube. In 1526, on the dread field of Mohacz, he destroyed the armed might of the kingdom of Hungary and slew its king; and for two hundred and fifty years thereafter, two-thirds of Hungary remained under Turkish rule. The Turks were threatening Vienna, the capital of the Austrian domains. It looked as if they might even overrun the whole of Europe. To Charles fell the main burden of defence against the Turk, though, to ease his task, he transferred his Austrian lands to his brother Ferdinand (1521).

These difficulties made the rivalry between Charles v. and France less unequal than the map makes it appear, and Francis did not hesitate to make use of them. He intrigued with the Protestant princes of Germany, and at the same time he intrigued with the Pope, who feared Charles' power in Italy. He even made open alliance with the Turks, to the scandal of Christendom, and Turkish galleys, loaded with Christian slaves, were welcomed in the harbour of Toulon. During the whole of Charles' reign the unceasing hostility of France was the greatest of his many troubles. It is impossible not to sympathise with

¹ See the maps, Atlas, Plates 8 and 25 (b).

the hard-pressed Emperor. But it is impossible also not to recognise that the resistance of France saved Europe from the danger of a universal monarchy, which could not have lasted long, but which would have done much harm. It also gave the Reformation time to get itself well rooted in Germany and other lands.

§ 3. *The Balance of Power.*

What was to be the attitude of England in this acute conflict between England's ancient enemy France, and the vast but loosely organised power which seemed to threaten her from all sides? That was the main problem which exercised Henry VIII. and Wolsey during the years 1519-1529. Both parties in the conflict were eager for English co-operation. But the advantage to English trade of friendly relations with the ruler of the Netherlands, the ancient tradition of hostility to France, and the more recent friendship with Spain, made an alliance with Charles v. seem the more natural, especially in the early days, before his strength was fully revealed. In 1520 the French and English kings had an interview at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, when they and their suites strove to outdo one another in lavish magnificence, and the interview left Francis in the belief that he could at any rate count on English neutrality. But Henry and Wolsey had already privately agreed to join the other side; their decision being helped by Charles v.'s promise to support Wolsey's candidature in the next papal election.

When war between the two great powers broke out in 1522, an English expedition once more landed in France. And once more, as an inevitable consequence, the Scots made an ineffective raid into England to support their French allies. But the war was not pursued with any vigour on the English side, because Charles v., with the aid of the Constable of Bourbon, a revolting subject of France, achieved such overwhelming successes as to frighten his allies. In the battle of Pavia (1525), he not only crushed the French army in Italy, and finally deprived France of the duchy of Milan; he even took the French king himself a prisoner. After this victory, it seemed, for the moment, as if Europe lay at Charles v.'s feet, and as if the old dream of the universal empire might be revived. To prevent this, to preserve the independence of France and the Balance of Power in Europe, Wolsey and his master carried out a

sudden and complete reversal of English policy, and made a close alliance with France. Because the see-saw had gone too violently down on one side, they threw their weight on to the other; and they undoubtedly helped to bring about the revival of France which soon took place.

It may fairly be said of English foreign policy during this period that, on the whole, it was more showy than advantageous; try as he would, Henry VIII. was never able to play a dominating part in European affairs, but was at most only a makeweight. It is often said, also, that Wolsey was influenced mainly by personal motives, and that, having supported Charles V. in order to be elected Pope, he deserted him in 1525 because Clement VII. had been chosen in his stead. This may have helped to influence his policy. But the outstanding fact of the period is that under Wolsey's guidance England had broken away from mediæval ideas of foreign policy. English policy was no longer governed by such simple and unrealisable ambitions as the conquest of France. It was now increasingly governed by the consideration of the position in Europe as a whole, and it had arrived at the conclusion that English interests would suffer if any single power were permitted to dictate to all Europe. The doctrine of the Balance of Power had emerged; and with its emergence the modern era in foreign relations had begun.

[Fisher's book, already referred to under Chapter I.; Creighton's *Wolsey* (Twelve English Statesmen); Johnson, *Europe in the Sixteenth Century*; Abbott, *Expansion of Europe*; Armstrong, *Charles V.*]

CHAPTER IV

THE UNVEILING OF THE OUTER WORLD

§ 1. *The First Great Discoveries.*

WHILE the fruitless and confusing wars of the European States, which fill the pages of history books, were dragging out their dreary course, another series of events was taking place which was to have an infinitely more momentous influence upon the destinies of the island peoples. The most extraordinary outburst of exploring activity that has ever taken place was transforming the aspect of the world. Within the generation between 1490 and 1523 the twin continents of the New World had been discovered, the coast-line of Africa had been explored, the waters of the Indian Ocean and the China Seas had been for the first time ploughed by European keels, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans had been mapped out, and the round world had been circum-navigated. No such transformation in the aspect of the world has ever taken place as took place in this generation. The area open to the exuberant enterprise of the European peoples was multiplied a hundredfold. Western civilisation, hitherto limited to Europe, began that gradual conquest of the world which has filled the last four centuries. A new and far more fruitful field of rivalry was opened to the European nations, whose narrower conflicts we have just been observing. Above all, the centre of balance in the civilised world had begun to shift; and the British Islands, hitherto on the outer fringe of the known world, were soon to find themselves in the centre of the main streams of world traffic and enterprise. It is obviously of vital importance that we should realise the nature of the great movement which was to have so profound an influence upon the fortunes of the island peoples.

Although mediæval Europe had always used the luxuries that came from the East, and above all from India, it had known practically nothing of the lands from which these luxuries came, but had been content to pick them up on the shores of the Mediterranean or the Black Sea from the

Eastern caravans that brought them thither. A few daring travellers, like Carpini, Rubruquis, and the great Marco Polo,¹ brought back wonderful tales from Mongolia and Cathay and the hot lands of India, which every one knew of as the land of gems and spices; but the real ignorance of even learned men regarding the shape of the Old World may readily be seen by a glance at any map of this period.²

A variety of circumstances during the fifteenth century combined to bring about a sudden zest for exploration. The discovery of the mariner's compass made distant sea voyages possible even beneath hidden or unfamiliar stars. The eager, questing spirit of the Renaissance found a natural expression in geographical exploration. The revival of classical studies reminded men that Aristotle had asserted that the earth was a globe, and this was reinforced by the astronomical discoveries of Copernicus: the map-makers therefore began to apply their notions of the shape of the earth's land-masses to the globular theory. The study of Herodotus disclosed the fact that the ancient Phœnicians had sailed round Africa, leaving by the Red Sea, and returning by the Straits of Gibraltar. The increasing prosperity of Europe demanded a greater abundance in the supply of the luxuries which came from the East; and meanwhile the disturbances caused by the Turkish conquests interfered with (though of course they did not put a stop to) the already insufficient volume of these goods that came by caravan.

Finally the Portuguese, having wholly freed their country from the Moors, were tempted to pursue these secular enemies into Northern Africa, all the more because the strength of Spain gave them no room for expansion at home. The motives of this enterprise were at first largely religious, and they were strengthened by legends. Somewhere in Eastern Africa, it was believed, a Christian emperor, the famous Prester John, still held sway, and the Portuguese dreamed of somehow joining hands with him, and winning a great victory for Christianity by taking the Moslem world on the flank. These were wild and unpractical dreams; but no dream was too wild, and no enterprise too daring, for the men of this age, when the whole world seemed to lie open to the adventurer.

During the first half of the fifteenth century, inspired by a prince of their royal house, Henry the Navigator,

¹ See Book II., Chapter I., p. 88.

² See the mediæval maps reproduced in Atlas, Plate 46 (c) and (d).

the Portuguese had taught themselves to build ships that could stand the rough usage of the outer seas, and had begun to push gradually southwards round the coast of Western Africa.¹ The barren shores of the Sahara Desert delayed them long, but before Prince Henry died in 1460 they had rounded Cape Verde, and soon afterwards they reached Sierra Leone, where the coast began to trend hopefully eastward. Here gold-dust and negro slaves were to be got, and exploration began to reap its material reward. But then the coast began to lengthen out endlessly southwards; and almost a generation passed ere, in 1487, Bartholomew Diaz found at last a point at which the trend of the coast was unmistakably eastwards. He called it the Cape of Storms: but when he returned, his master, King John II., realising that now the route to India was open, renamed it the Cape of Good Hope, and began to make great preparations for exploiting this superb opportunity.

Ten years passed before the new route was actually used. *In the interval a still greater enterprise had been set on foot.* A Genoese sailor in the Portuguese service, Christopher Columbus, convinced himself that India could be far more quickly reached by sailing due west across the Atlantic, than by following the slow and toilsome route of the Portuguese. Queen Isabella of Castile, more than a little jealous of the Portuguese achievements, thought it worth while to risk three little ships in testing his theory. After a voyage on the trade winds of only two months, Columbus touched land at one of the Bahama Islands, October 12, 1492. He had found a new world without knowing it; and though he made two more voyages, and on the third reached the mainland of South America, and the mouth of the mighty river Orinoco, he never knew what he had done, but died in the conviction that the land he had reached was part of Asia. He had also laid the foundations of a new empire for Spain. At first it was limited to the island of Hispaniola (Hayti); but though the gentle natives of this and other West Indian islands were forced to labour as slaves for their mysterious lords from across the sea, they produced for a long time little wealth—nothing that could be compared with the vast profits of the Portuguese Eastern trade. The Pope, by an award of 1493, divided the new discoveries between Spain and Portugal by drawing an imaginary

¹ The course of the explorations summarised in this chapter is illustrated by the map, Atlas, Plate 47.

line north and south through the Atlantic; but as yet, and for a generation to come, the Portuguese share seemed vastly the more valuable.

§ 2. *The Portuguese Power in the East.*

The whole resources and energy of the Portuguese people were thrown into their great enterprise, which opened when the great navigator Vasco da Gama, after a voyage of thirteen months, reached the coast of India at Calicut in August 1498. It was a vastly more difficult and dangerous enterprise than the two months' voyage of Columbus, and it immediately led to far more brilliant results. On the coast of India the Portuguese found many petty princes, who were easily dominated; and they had no trade rivals save the Arab merchants, who had hitherto carried the products of India to the ports of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. The Portuguese soon controlled the principal Indian ports, where they purchased the merchandise of India in their king's name, and shipped it to Lisbon. Here the fine stuffs, gems and spices of the East were now to be got far more abundantly than before. Lisbon became the commercial capital of the world, displacing Venice; and the ships of all nations resorted to its busy and prosperous wharves.

During the first twenty years of the sixteenth century, while the potentates of Europe were squandering blood and money on the fight for Italy, the Portuguese were organising an extraordinary commercial empire in the East. The real organiser of their power was Affonso de Albuquerque, governor of the Portuguese Indies, 1509-15. He conquered the valuable island of Goa, on the west coast of India—a highly defensible position with a splendid harbour, which he turned into the capital of the Portuguese Empire. Here alone large numbers of Portuguese emigrants settled, strictly enforced their own religion upon the native subjects, and by intermarriage gave rise to a considerable population of mixed birth. Other Portuguese 'factories' or trading stations were dotted round the coasts of India and Ceylon; there were garrisoned ports and calling stations at intervals along the east coast of Africa; there were strong posts at the mouths of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, almost closing these ancient routes of commerce. Further east a station at Malacca controlled the gateway to the Malay Archipelago, where the rich Spice Islands, the centre of

the most lucrative traffic in the world, passed under Portuguese control. Eastwards again the Portuguese later opened up a trade with China, where they acquired a fortified base in the island of *Maçao*, and they dealt also with the island empire of Japan. The whole of the trade between the East and Europe was in their hands, and it brought into Lisbon an incredible stream of wealth.

The Portuguese empire in the East was never more than a trading monopoly, and it was absolutely dependent upon the maintenance of naval supremacy. Except in Goa, there were no settlements, and no considerable territorial conquests. Moreover, from the first this vast trade was turned into a monopoly of the Crown, and, while it brought wealth into the country, it did nothing to develop the enterprise and initiative of the Portuguese people. It was a marvellous enterprise for a little nation. But it overtaxed the nation's strength, and the process of decay set in very early.

In the West, by a happy accident, the Portuguese at the same time got possession of an invaluable territory. In 1500 one of their captains, *Cabral*, on his way home from an Indian voyage, was driven out of his course, and touched upon the coast of Brazil. Here, after a time, a real colony was established. The coastline of Brazil was parcelled out into a series of principalities which were granted to great Portuguese nobles. They were given absolute power over the native population, who soon began to melt away. They brought out Portuguese emigrants in considerable numbers, but members of the master-race were unwilling to undertake heavy labour under a tropical sun. So the Portuguese began to transport negroes from their West African trading stations to their Brazilian plantations, and this was the beginning of negro slavery in America.

§ 3 *The Spanish Empire in America*

Meanwhile the modest beginning of the Spanish empire in the West Indies had undergone a wonderful expansion. The greater islands had all been explored and occupied. The shores of the Gulf of Mexico had been marked out. A footing had been obtained on 'Terra Firma,' or the 'Spanish Main'—the north coast of South America. Vasco Nunez de Balboa had crossed the Isthmus of Panama, and discovered that a vast ocean separated the New World from Asia (1513). The most intrepid of all the explorers, Magellan,

a Portuguese in the Spanish service, had made his way down all the coast of South America, seeking for a passage through to Asia. He had found the tortuous and perilous straits which still bear his name (1520); pushing ever westwards, without map or chart, he had crossed the mighty Pacific, and reached the Philippine Islands and the Malay Archipelago; and the remnants of his heroic company, after their captain's death, had found their way home by the familiar Portuguese route round the Cape of Good Hope, after the most courageous voyage in the whole history of exploration. It is recorded that, when the ragged handful reached a Spanish port, their first duty was to go barefoot to do penance in church, because they had lost a day in going round the world, and had observed all the feasts and fasts of the Church on the wrong days. But the main result of these wonderful voyages was that the chief features of the distribution of the world's surface between land and water were now known; and the Spaniard realised that it was a new world that was in his grasp.¹

This was at first a disappointment, for it was the fabled wealth of the East that the Spaniard had hoped to tap; and there was little wealth to be made out of the naked natives of the Caribbean. Some of them were timid and soft, so that they died out annoyingly under the stress of forced labour; others were ferocious and untamable; and it soon became necessary to replace them with negroes from Africa, according to the Portuguese plan. But if the first acquisitions in the New World brought little wealth, and were disappointingly poor in gold, they at least presented a field for adventure, which delighted the hearts of the fierce and daring Spanish gentlemen. The story of the deeds of the *conquistadores*, as these romantic adventurers were called, surpasses belief or imagination. They were incredibly brave, incredibly brutal, incredibly avaricious. And always they justified their worst ferocities by the claims of religion. They were fighting the battle of the cross against the infidel. It adds to the reputation of their valour that they were convinced that evil spirits filled the air about them, and battled against them in the impenetrable jungles, the uncharted seas and the wild mountains through which they forced their way.

Soon the daring of these fierce adventurers was rewarded by the discovery of lands of inexhaustible wealth. Her-

¹ Compare the two maps, Behaim's of 1492 and Schöner's of 1523, shown in Atlas, Plate 47 (b) and (c).

nando Cortez and a handful of men, boldly advancing into the plateau of Mexico, found there a civilised people, the Aztecs, among whom the precious metals were so abundant that they were used for the common implements of life. In two years (1519-21), this little band conquered the whole empire, wiped out its cruel religion in blood, enslaved its people, and took possession of the mines of Potosi, from which, thenceforward, a stream of bullion poured annually across the Atlantic into Spain. Presently a still wealthier empire, that of the Incas of Peru, was discovered and conquered by the detestable and bloodthirsty tyrant Pizarro, in the ten years following 1525; and from the second and still richer Potosi another stream of wealth began to flow through the Pacific ports over the isthmus of Panama, whence it was shipped in the annual treasure-fleet from Nombre de Dios to Cadiz.

Mexico and Peru—these with their mines formed the main strength of the Spanish empire in the New World;¹ and here a mixed population, sprung from the marriage of Spanish soldiers with Aztec and Peruvian women, began to arise. But Spanish daring spread further still. Up among the Andes of Peru, Orellana found the head-waters of a mighty river, the Amazon: he followed it down in boats for nearly two thousand miles, till it brought him into the Atlantic. Farther south, Spaniards discovered the fertile plains of the La Plata river, and the rocky coastlands of Chile. Farther north Hernando de Soto made a marvellous journey through the forests of Florida, westwards over one river and another, till he reached the vast stream of the Mississippi.

But the full extension of the Spanish empire had not yet been reached at the period with which we are dealing. The amazing wealth of Mexico and Peru was only beginning to be disclosed; and it was not until 1542 that the Emperor Charles v. took in hand the organisation of this vast dominion, and tried to check the rapacity, the cruelty and the destructive feuds of the men who had built it. The first half of the sixteenth century was the age of the *conquistadores*. The second half was the age of the organisers. We are not here concerned to explain in detail how the gigantic Spanish empire was organised and governed. But one main fact must be noted. The settlers in America were allowed no share of control over their own affairs. Even the governors,

¹ See the map of Spanish South America, Atlas, Plate 58 (4), and of Central America and the West Indies, Plate 53

sent out from Spain, had little freedom of action. Everything was under the rigid control of the Council of the Indies sitting at Madrid; and its policy was to secure the absolute mastery of the Crown over all the resources of the New World. Not only were other nations to have no share; not only were no commercial relations with other peoples permitted: even Spaniards were not allowed to exploit these vast resources, except under royal licence and strict royal control. And the result of these restrictions was that the abounding enterprise which the Spaniards had earlier shown rapidly died down, and the huge empire, which included some of the most prosperous regions of the world, fell into a condition of stagnation with astonishing quickness, and became little more than the region within which the Spanish king's mines produced bullion to meet the cost of his European wars.

§ 4. *The Modest Enterprises of England and France.*

It was not to be expected that the other Western peoples should permanently allow the Portuguese and the Spaniards to enjoy an undisputed monopoly of the outer world. But they were very slow to take action. Columbus, indeed, had sent his brother, Bartholomew, to England, to ask Henry VII.'s support for his great idea, and the English king had not been unfavourable; but in the meantime Isabella of Castile had taken up the project. A little later Henry VII. gave his patronage and some financial backing to the Genoese sailor, John Cabot, who, with his three sons, made two voyages from Bristol and explored the coast of North America from Labrador to Virginia, being actually the first explorer to touch on the continent of the New World. But this promising beginning was not followed up; in truth the maritime resources of England were scarcely yet sufficiently developed to be ready for great enterprises. Nor did France play a much larger part. In 1523 Francis I. lent ships to another Italian sailor, Verazzano, who explored part of the North American coast; and in 1534 the Frenchman Cartier made his way into the estuary of the St. Lawrence, and gave the name of Canada to the land he found. He thought, as Cabot had thought before him, that the Gulf of St. Lawrence might be the opening of a north-west passage, parallel to the channel which Magellan had discovered a few years earlier; and the dream of a north-west passage, by which the northern peoples could reach

the East by a route of their own without conflicting with Spaniards or Portuguese, continued to haunt men's minds for a long time to come. But nothing was done to follow up these beginnings, except that English and French fishermen sometimes found their way to the cod fisheries of the Newfoundland banks. The world was in fact content for the present that the first explorers should keep what they had found; all the more because they were supported by the papal award, which was still universally respected. Not until the Reformation did men begin to dream of a direct challenge to the Spanish dominion.

The expansion of the British peoples had not yet begun. But the transformation of the aspect of the world by the great discoveries had made it possible; and therefore, though the islanders played so small a part in the task of exploration, it forms an essential chapter in their history.

[There is an excellent lecture by Lord Acton on the subject of this chapter in his *Lectures on Modern History*; E. J. Payne, *European Colonies*; Abbott, *Expansion of Europe*, vol. i.; Beazley's *Dawn of Modern Geography*; Markham's *Columbus*; Guillemard's *Magellan*; Stephens' *Albuquerque*; Danvers' *Portuguese in India*; Beazley's *J. and S. Cabot*; Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico* and *Conquest of Peru*; Bourne's *Spain in America*; Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History of America*.]

CHAPTER V

THE REFORMATION IN EUROPE AND IN ENGLAND

(A D. 1517-1559)

Henry VIII., 1509 : Edward VI., 1547 : Mary, 1553 :
Elizabeth, 1558.

FOR more than two centuries, as we have seen, there had been a deep and growing resentment among the English against the powers claimed by the Pope over the English Church and the way in which these powers were exercised ; and this resentment had produced a long series of measures for the restriction of papal authority. There had been an equal dissatisfaction with the condition of the Church, with the wealth, pride, corruption and idleness of many of the bishops, priests and monks ; and these evils, instead of diminishing, had grown steadily worse. There had even been, in the time of Wycliffe and his followers, a questioning of some of the fundamental doctrines of the Church, and an anxiety to repudiate the superstitions with which its practice had been encrusted during the Middle Ages ; and at the end of the fourteenth century it had almost seemed as if the Protestant Reformation was going to be anticipated in England by a century and a half. Sharp persecution had failed to crush out the Lollard movement, and Lollards were still being burned or imprisoned at intervals in the reign of Henry VII. and the early years of Henry VIII. But the revolutionary doctrines of the Lollards were not widely held in England. It was not the doctrines of the Church or its mode of worship which had, as yet, aroused any widespread discontent ; it was the high claims of papal supremacy, which seemed inconsistent with the proud national spirit of England, the too frequent laxity and ignorance of churchmen, and their vast and often ill-employed wealth, which alienated men's minds.

§ I. *The Reformation in Europe.*

This dissatisfaction was by no means limited to England, but was almost universal throughout Europe. In Bohemia it had led early in the fifteenth century to a formidable

revolt, the Hussite movement, which in many ways anticipated the Protestant revolution. In Italy and in Spain it was not so strong as elsewhere ; in Spain the long struggle against the Moors had kept alive something of the spirit of the crusades ; in Italy the Papacy was regarded as a sort of national institution, and a very profitable one, while the best Italian minds were engrossed by artistic interests, and left religious questions largely on one side. Yet even in Italy the revolt of the conscience of Christendom against the condition of the Church had been expressed by the fiery preaching of the monk Savonarola. But the dissatisfaction was deep and growing in France, in Scotland and in the Scandinavian countries. It was deepest of all in Germany, just because Germany was a weak and divided country, which had no powerful government to protect it against the worst abuses, as the kings of France, and the kings and parliaments of England, could in some degree protect these countries. A serious attempt had been made in the first half of the fifteenth century to carry out a great reform by means of a series of General Councils. But this had failed, and the failure had intensified the universal discontent ; while the character of the popes of the following generations had made it worse. Popes like Julius II. or Leo X. or, worst of all, the infamous Alexander VI., had appeared to be altogether indifferent to the spiritual needs of the world, wholly wrapped up in political intrigues or in their territorial ambitions as Italian princes, and just as unscrupulous and immoral in pursuing these intrigues and ambitions as any of the lay princes with whom they dealt. And in the midst of all this deepening discontent had come the Renaissance, with its spirit of free inquiry, its refusal to be bound by old forms and rules, its adventurous daring.

Although in Italy the scholars of the Renaissance concerned themselves little about religious questions, in Germany and England the new spirit of inquiry found its chief vent in this sphere. The Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old and New Testaments were revised and critically studied. The extravagances of the mediæval scholastic philosophers were attacked. The Humanists of Germany, the Netherlands and England—such men as Reuchlin and Erasmus, Colet and Sir Thomas More—cared more about religious questions than about all others, and laboured to bring about a purification of the Church. And the critical attitude of the scholars strengthened the hostility of the mass of ordinary men.

Since the heads of the Church had not done anything, and did not seem likely to do anything, to remedy the ills of which all men complained, it was inevitable that the prevailing discontent should find some means of expressing itself. Either there must come an outburst of reforming or destructive energy from below; or the lay princes, who were everywhere establishing their despotic power over the lives and property of their subjects, might be tempted to make use of this current of opinion to obtain control over their subjects' consciences by substituting their own authority for that of the Pope, and to enrich themselves by annexing the vast wealth of the Church. Both of these elements, popular discontent and princely acquisitiveness, were everywhere combined in the great upheaval known as the Protestant Reformation.

But there was a wide difference between a desire for reform in the Church and a willingness to support its dissolution into fragments or to sympathise with the violence of hot-headed partisans. The unity of the Church had long been the sole expression of the unity of Christendom and civilisation. The spiritual supremacy of the Pope, whatever its abuses might have been, had been the sole means of enforcing the moral law upon all States in their relations with one another. For that reason many of the most earnest preachers of the need for reform, like Erasmus, had no sympathy with the violent methods by which the reformers proceeded; and Sir Thomas More, the noblest Englishman of his time, the free spirit that dreamed of *Utopia*, was ready to die on the scaffold rather than give his assistance in the rending of the 'seamless garment' of the Church.

The movement of the Reformation began independently and almost simultaneously in Germany, Switzerland and France. But it was in Germany that it obtained the most rapid and striking triumphs, partly because the grievances of the German people against the Church were greater than those of other peoples, and partly because the divided condition of the country gave it a freer field of action. In united countries like England, France or Spain, such a movement would be either crushed by the power of government, or taken under its protection and control. But the Emperor, nominal ruler of all Germany, was distracted by his desperate wars with France and with the Turks; and the numerous independent princes and free towns were therefore able to follow the course that suited them best.

Some of them were influenced by genuine conviction ; others simply by the chance of winning power and plunder, which the attack on the Church afforded ; the majority, perhaps, by a mixture of both motives.

In 1517 the bold monk Martin Luther, Professor of Theology at the Saxon University of Wittenberg, was roused to make a protest against the open sale of ' indulgences ' (or exemptions from the performance of penance) as a means of raising money for the building of St. Peter's Church at Rome. To the door of the church at Wittenberg he affixed a long series of theses, or propositions, regarding indulgences, which denied the power of the Pope to issue them, and asserted that forgiveness for sins was not to be obtained by payment, or penance, or priestly intercession, but only by faith. The theses of Wittenberg were rapidly spread, by the aid of the printing press, throughout Germany, and were everywhere welcomed with enthusiasm. They led to a lively controversy, which all Europe watched with intense interest, and in the course of which Luther found himself forced from point to point, until he had boldly taken up the position of repudiating the papal authority altogether, as well as other fundamental doctrines of the Church. In this controversy Henry VIII. of England, proud of his theological learning, eagerly took part, and in 1521 published a book against the heresies of Luther. The Pope rewarded him by granting him the title ' Defender of the Faith,' which is still borne by every British sovereign, and in the form ' Fid. Def.' or F. D. appears on every British coin. The Pope himself excommunicated Luther (1520), who replied, to the delight of half Germany, by publicly burning the bull of excommunication, and thus openly defying the papal authority. The Emperor attempted to stop the alarming movement by an edict issued at the Diet of Worms (1521) ; Luther defied the Emperor also. He was only able to act thus boldly because he was protected by his master, the Elector of Saxony, who had the support of many of the lay princes of Germany : without, as yet, committing themselves too deeply, the princes saw many possibilities of advantage to themselves in this great upheaval. Luther was removed by the Elector to a safe retreat in the castle of the Wartburg, among the forest-covered mountains of Thuringia, whence he poured forth a stream of pamphlets, in the intervals of translating the Bible into German for the use of common men.

But during Luther's retirement the movement began

first stage in the English Reformation, was a purely political act, due wholly to the determination of a wilful king to have his own way at all costs. It was carried through comparatively swiftly, and with surprisingly little trouble, because Henry VIII. was not merely wilful, but extraordinarily shrewd, resolute and ruthless, and because, as he well knew, the bulk of the nation, whose feelings he thoroughly understood, had no tenderness for the papal supremacy, though they had as little anxiety as the king himself to change their beliefs.

The root of the whole matter was Henry's desire to be divorced from his queen. Catherine of Aragon had been his wife for eighteen years. She had borne him a daughter, Mary, but no son; and the lack of a male heir made the Tudor dynasty seem insecure. Moreover Henry had fallen in love with a lady of the court, the sprightly and voluptuous Anne Boleyn. Under these circumstances the king's tender conscience was awakened. He remembered that Catherine had first been married to his elder brother, Arthur. Surely this made his own marriage invalid? It was true that a papal dispensation had been obtained, But had the Pope fully understood? And in any case, could the Pope grant a dispensation from a divine law, set forth in the Book of Leviticus? The royal conscience must be relieved; and in 1527 Cardinal Wolsey was ordered to obtain a divorce from the Pope.

Wolsey did his best, carrying on negotiations through two long years. But unfortunately the Pope, Clement VII., was now at the mercy of the Emperor, who was the injured queen's nephew, and he dared not do what Henry required, especially as he believed it to be unjust. The most that Wolsey could obtain was a commission to try the case along with another cardinal, Campeggio. But the inquiry was deliberately delayed by Campeggio, and finally adjourned without a decision. Henry's anger knew no bounds. His essentially tyrannical nature got the mastery. Without thought of Wolsey's long years of service, he stripped him of all his offices and nearly all his wealth, and started an action against him for a breach of the Act of Præmunire (1393), in that he had acted as papal legate. He had done so with Henry's full assent. It was in 1529 that Wolsey's vast power suddenly collapsed. Next year he was saved from even more complete ruin by death.

The fall of Wolsey made Henry feel the delightful sense that his own power was irresistible. Henceforth he played

the part of a pure tyrant ; but always of a tyrant who knew what he was doing, and how far he could safely go. Wolsey's place as Chancellor was given to that very perfect gentleman, Sir Thomas More, the witty and gentle scholar whom the king had loved. But More was obviously not the man to carry out the new plan which was shaping in the king's mind : the plan of frightening the Pope into submission by unchaining Parliament for an attack on the Church. This plan was pursued for four years with the utmost cunning, but entirely without success. The more obstinate the Pope showed himself, the more obstinate the king became, until he ended by abolishing all papal authority in England, and annexing it to the Crown. Then at last, having burned down a venerable house to roast his pig, he was able triumphantly to cancel his own marriage, and to give Anne Boleyn a brief hour of splendour before sending her to the scaffold. Having thus established his power, and proved it irresistible, he found it fatally easy to do other terrible deeds at the dictation of his tyrannous passions.

The king was the engineer of this tremendous revolution. But he needed instruments. The chief of his instruments was Parliament, which was by tradition very ready to attack the Church, and was genuinely devoted to its masterful prince. During the long period of seven years (1529-1536), the ' Long Parliament of the Reformation ' carried out his will in all particulars, accepting momentous changes in the law, or sentencing the king's victims to death by Acts of Attainder, with scarcely a quaver of opposition. But even Henry VIII.'s parliaments needed management ; and for this work, and for all the dirty work of these years, Henry found an admirable instrument in Thomas Cromwell, formerly a servant of the fallen cardinal.

Cromwell was an extraordinary example of the romantic vicissitudes possible to a man of the Renaissance age. He was the son of a Putney blacksmith. He had travelled in Flanders and Italy, but even Italy could teach him nothing in the unscrupulous arts of Renaissance statecraft. He had been in turn a soldier, a lawyer, a merchant and a money-lender. Then suddenly he became the feared and hated master of a great kingdom, and the wrecker of ancient institutions. He raised his master to such a pinnacle of despotism as no English king had ever attained before, or has ever reached since. But no one knew better than Cromwell himself that he was the creature of his master's breath. When he had served his turn, he was flung aside

like an old shoe, just as his patron the cardinal had been before him; and died on the scaffold to which he had sent so many better men. He was courageous, full of ingenuity, untiringly industrious, attentive to every detail, without sentiment, without pity, without scruple and without remorse; in short, an ideal organiser of despotism, and an ideal tool for evil deeds.

The course of the great revolution of 1529-1536 is easily traced. First in 1529 Parliament was encouraged to attack some of the profitable abuses of the Church—probate and mortuary fees, and the pluralities for which popes often granted licences. But an embassy sent to Rome to report these events, and to report at the same time that the Defender of the Faith was most orthodoxly forbidding Lutheran pamphlets, and had ordered Tyndale's translation of the Bible into English to be publicly burned, found the Pope still ruefully inflexible about the divorce.

So the king and Cromwell next (1530) began a direct attack upon the English Church, to prove to the Pope that no resistance need be expected here. A prosecution was started against the whole of the clergy of England for having broken the Act of Præmunire by recognising Wolsey as legate. They had recognised him by the king's orders, but that made no difference; they had broken the Act, and the penalty was confiscation of all their property. But Convocation was told that they might be forgiven if they voted a very large subsidy, and formally recognised the king as 'the sole protector and supreme head of the Church and Clergy of England.' Ruefully enough they gave way, only adding the timid phrase, 'as far as the law of Christ allows.' The tyrant was learning how easy it was to get his way. But still the Pope did not yield.

Now Parliament was again brought into play, petitioning against the abuses of the Church courts, and the legislative powers exercised by Convocation. In trepidation and at the eleventh hour Convocation prepared a scheme of reform. It was of no use. Convocation was told that it must agree *first*, to make no laws in future without the king's licence, and *secondly*, to accept beforehand a revision of the whole existing body of Church law, by a committee nominated by the king. This was to turn the Church into the mere creature of the king's will. But resistance was hopeless. Convocation had to give way; and the 'submission of the clergy,' as this act is called, may be regarded as the turning-point in the development of the royal supremacy.

Next (still in 1532) Parliament was led to pass the Annates Act, whereby the heavy payments customarily made by newly elected bishops to the Pope were declared illegal. But to give the Pope one last chance, the Act empowered the king to bargain on the subject. His agents in Rome were instructed to represent him as holding back the hostility of his people with the utmost difficulty. Nevertheless the Pope refused to yield.

So in 1533 the breach was made definite. In January Henry married Anne Boleyn, but for some months kept the marriage a secret, so as to give the Pope another chance. Parliament passed the Act of Appeals, forbidding all appeals to Rome, and by Henry's orders his newly appointed archbishop, the timid half-Protestant Cranmer, assumed the papal prerogative of trying and determining the great divorce question, and declared that the marriage of Catherine had been invalid from the first; which implied that the king was still a bachelor, and that the Princess Mary was illegitimate. Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn was publicly announced; the new queen was crowned in Westminster Abbey; and in the autumn gave birth to a daughter, the Princess Elizabeth. Elizabeth was not a year old before the king had executed her mother, after having declared this marriage also invalid, on the ground that Anne had been previously contracted. Thus Elizabeth was illegitimate in the eyes of all orthodox Catholics, and illegitimate also by the edict of her father, and by the parliamentary Act by which her mother was attainted. Such was the unlucky beginning of the glorious princess who was to lead England through some of the most critical and triumphant years of her history.

After the open defiance of the Boleyn marriage the breach with Rome was incurable; and it only remained to make it formal and complete. This was done by means of a very important series of Acts of Parliament, passed in 1534. One of these, besides forbidding payments of any kind to Rome, provided that henceforth bishops of the English Church should be elected by the chapters of their cathedrals, but that the chapters should be bound to elect within twelve days the person whom the king nominated, failing which, the king's nominee should be consecrated; this is still the practice of the English Church. A second Act embodied in statute law the limitation of the powers of Convocation already accepted by the clergy. A third vested the succession to the crown in the heirs of Henry

and Anne Boleyn and, after elaborately setting forth the arguments against the validity of the king's first marriage, required all loyal subjects to take an oath to the whole of this Act, and made it high treason to refuse. It was, of course, an oath which no honest Catholic could take, however willing he might be to recognise the accomplished fact; and thus the Act formed a sword at the necks of all who differed from the king even in thought. Lastly, the most important Act of the series was the first of the long line of Acts of Uniformity; it declared that the king 'justly and rightfully is and ought to be Supreme Head of the Church of England.'

§ 3. *The Dissolution of the Monasteries and the Organisation of Despotism.*

The next six years (1534-1540) form a period of sheer undiluted tyranny, directed on behalf of the king by the hated Cromwell, who bore the title of Vicar-General of the Church. In the first place, a series of monstrous executions or judicial murders aroused the horror of Europe, and established a sort of reign of terror in England. Four Carthusian monks, eminent for their piety, were hanged, drawn and quartered for refusing to take the oath. For the same reason the saintly and scholarly Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and the noblest living Englishman, Sir Thomas More, once the king's familiar friend, went to the scaffold (1535); though both were willing to recognise the new queen. These were the first martyrs of the Roman faith in England, and they died with a quiet and heroic dignity that exalted the cause for which they suffered. Within a few months (1536) Anne Boleyn, having aroused the king's suspicions, was also beheaded; and her marriage, for questioning whose validity such noble blood had been shed, was declared to have been invalid from the beginning. Henry, once more a bachelor, consoled himself by marrying Jane Seymour, the daughter of an old and rapidly rising English family. She was the most happy of Henry's queens, first because she bore him the long-desired son, afterwards Edward VI., about whose legitimacy there could be no question, since Catherine of Aragon had died shortly before; and secondly, because she died before her ruthless spouse had tired of her. As yet, though all connexion with Rome had been broken off, no change whatsoever had been made in the doctrine or

practice of the Church of England. But Cromwell was reputed to have some leanings towards the new doctrines, and the gentle Archbishop Cranmer, though dominated by his formidable master, had reforming sympathies, which were shared by several of the more recently appointed bishops. Men hoped, or feared (according to their attitude), that the repudiation of papal supremacy might now be followed by a doctrinal change. A certain freedom was allowed to Lutheran preachers. In 1536 the king issued a statement of the beliefs which he required his subjects to hold in the *Ten Articles*, in which, while there was no real departure from the fundamental doctrines of the Roman Church, notably Transubstantiation, some concessions were made to the reformers, especially by the abandonment of the doctrine of Purgatory. And in a series of Injunctions to the Clergy, by which the Articles were followed, the clergy were ordered to preach against 'the usurped power of the Bishop of Rome,' to cease praising images and relics, and to place in the choir of every church a Bible in Latin and English for every one to read.

But the main work of these years was the suppression of the monasteries. In 1536, after a very perfunctory inquiry, brutally carried out, an appalling report on the condition of the monasteries was issued. Some part of the hideous charges of vice levied against the monks in this document may have been true, but the method in which it was drawn up deprived it of real authority. Nevertheless Parliament decreed the dissolution of 376 monasteries with an annual income of less than £200 apiece, and the confiscation of all their property to the Crown. This was the last important Act of the Long Parliament of 1529-36, which had been the instrument of such revolutionary changes. It left the greater monasteries still untouched. But during the next three years one after another of them was inveigled or forced into a surrender of their privileges and property. They resisted as much as they dared: the abbots of Colchester and Reading had to be judicially murdered *pour encourager les autres*, before the resistance was beaten down. Finally a new Parliament in 1539 gave the force of law to all earlier surrenders, and to any that might yet be brought about, and vested all surrendered monastic property in the Crown. Under this Act the last monastic institutions in England disappeared.¹

¹ See the map, Atlas, Plate 37, where the numbers and distribution of the monasteries are shown.

Many of the monasteries were undoubtedly corrupt and badly conducted. The monastic system had outlived its greatest usefulness. There were good grounds for transferring their resources to purposes which they had once fulfilled, but which were now met by other means ; Wolsey had not hesitated to suppress monasteries in order to endow his colleges, and many enlightened churchmen were quite ready to see this policy carried out on a large scale. There were still important functions which the monasteries performed : they administered charity generously, they gave shelter to the homeless ; and at this period, when economic change was robbing many of their livelihood, the necessity of some organised system of poor relief was greater than ever. If the wealth of the monasteries had been devoted to well organised schemes for the relief of poverty, the encouragement of education, and the provision of religious teaching, the suppression would have been justified ; and there is reason for thinking that Parliament was led to expect that much of the monastic wealth would have been used in this way.

But no such use was made of it ; except that four new bishoprics were endowed with monastic lands. Most of the monastic estates, scattered over every part of England, were granted, or sold at low prices, to nobles, courtiers, officials, country-gentlemen, yeomen and men of even humbler birth. About one thousand men participated in the great plunder. They owed their new wealth to the king and to the religious revolution, and therefore were bound to be steady supporters of both. Out of the plunder of the Church sprang a new nobility, far more submissive to the Crown than the older nobility which had been destroyed in the Wars of the Roses. Many of the great houses which have played leading parts in later English history thus for the first time rose into wealth and prominence ; and in many cases the splendid country mansions which have been the centres and tokens of their greatness still bear the names of abbeyes or priories.

The wholesale and sudden transfer of vast estates to new masters who had no traditional associations with their tenantry quickened and intensified the economic changes that were already taking place. The monasteries had not always been good landlords ; but as a rule they had been conservative landlords, slow to make sweeping changes. The new-comers, whose first desire was to make wealth quickly, had no such hesitations ; and on a wholesale scale

they began to enclose the monastic lands for sheep-farming. This increased their own riches, and perhaps it increased the total wealth of the country; it undoubtedly stimulated the growth of the woollen industry which was to play an increasing part in the development of English greatness. But it also involved the dispossession or ruin of many cultivators, and added to the number of wandering landless men whose 'vagabondage' puzzled statesmen during the rest of the century. And at the same time all the relief hitherto afforded by the charity of the monasteries came to an end, and distress and discontent were greatly increased. Thus a change which might have led to great national advantage if it had been wisely carried out produced effects that were almost wholly evil, because it was carried out by a tyrant with a single eye to his own power and profit.

It was mainly the discontent caused by the suppression of the lesser monasteries which led, in 1536, to two risings in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, the counties where the monasteries had been most numerous. These were the only revolts with which Henry VIII. was ever troubled; and it is a striking illustration of the loyalty of the nation to its king that the rebels sincerely professed the most devoted affection for him, and prayed only that the king's evil counsellors—they meant Cromwell—should be dismissed. The Lincolnshire rising was easily put down. The Pilgrimage of Grace, as the Yorkshire rebellion was called, was much more formidable; it was joined by many nobles and gentlemen, and most admirably and moderately directed by Robert Aske, a barrister. Indeed, it was only broken up by the promise that a new Parliament should meet, and a free pardon be granted to all who had taken part. Henry's self-esteem found it hard to stomach such a check; and, taking advantage of a new and quite irresponsible outbreak, for which the leaders were not to blame, he wreaked his vengeance by executing all the leaders, and by commanding a terrible punishment of the offending districts. 'You shall in any wise,' he wrote to his agents, 'cause such dreadful execution to be done upon a good number of the inhabitants of every town, village, and hamlet . . . as well by the hanging of them up in trees or by the quartering of them, and the setting of their heads and quarters in every town great or small, as they may be a fearful spectacle to others hereafter that they would practise any like matter.' At any sign of resistance, the born tyrant sees blood.

To keep the disorderly North in good order there was

now set up, as a sort of branch of the Privy Council, a body called the Council of the North, which wielded large executive and judicial powers for a century to come. The device had already been adopted with good results in the case of Wales, where the Council of Wales and the Marches had since 1534 done excellent work, and had prepared the way for the incorporation of that backward land with England. The full union of England and Wales—the first of the long series of unions in the history of the British Commonwealth—belongs to this period. It was carried out by an Act of 1536, and completed in 1543. The special jurisdiction of the Marcher Lords at last disappeared; the English shire organisation was extended to every part of the country; and the Welsh shires and boroughs were given representatives in the English Parliament. But Wales was still backward and apt to be lawless; and therefore the special jurisdiction of the council was retained here, as in the backward and lawless northern counties. As these councils were wholly dependent upon the king's will, this involved a further extension of the royal power. But in this, as in other instances, it cannot be denied that the increase of royal power brought an increase of public order and peace.

§ 4. *The Culmination of Henry VIII.'s Power.*

One more service had yet to be rendered by Thomas Cromwell, the organiser of despotism: in 1539 he was called upon to pack and to manage a new Parliament—the most abject and servile which has ever met since Parliament existed in England. It was this Parliament which completed the destruction of the monasteries. It also accepted from the royal theologian a new and much more drastic demonstration of his orthodoxy in the Six Articles, which on all the main doctrinal points in dispute between Catholics and Protestants decided unmistakably on the Catholic side. While Parliament was sitting, a man was hanged in London for eating meat on a Friday, so strict was the Defender of the Faith; and his servile Parliament now endorsed the Six Articles with a ferocious penal statute which made death the penalty for differing, even in opinion, from the king. But the most remarkable achievement of this Parliament was the Act of Proclamations, which gave to all royal proclamations the force of law, and thus resigned into the king's hands the uncontrolled power of legislation. This represents the culminating point of the despotism of Henry VIII.

Now, indeed, the fabric of despotism was completed, and its architect, Cromwell, had done his work. Only one use remained for him ; he could die on the scaffold as the scapegoat for the unpopularity which recent events had roused. The immediate occasion of his fall was that he had persuaded the king to take, as his fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, a stolid and unprepossessing Netherlander, with the idea that so a link might be forged between England and the Protestant princes of Germany. But a single glance at the ' Flanders Mare,' as he called her, was enough for Henry : the lady was promptly divorced and pensioned off ; and Cromwell, loathed by the whole nation, and cast off by the king for whom he had worked so many crimes, had his reward (1540) in the joy with which his execution was hailed on all hands. ' Bluff King Hal ' became as popular as ever.

The last seven years of Henry's reign were comparatively quiet, and were not dominated by the personality of any single minister like Wolsey or Cromwell. The king was his own minister, wielding all the despotic authority over Church and State which Cromwell had built up for him. The chief event of the period was a war with France (1543-6), and Scotland (1542-7), in which Henry was once more ranged on the side of Charles v. It was conducted with a good deal of vigour. On the seas the fleet, on which Henry had never grudged money or thought, was steadily successful. On land the useful port of Boulogne was captured. In Scotland the death of James v., leaving a girl-child, Mary Queen of Scots, as his sole heir, seemed to renew the chance of uniting the two kingdoms by marrying a girl queen to a boy Prince of Wales, which had attracted Edward I. nearly three centuries before ; and, owing to the progress of the Reformation in Scotland, there were many Scots who might have favoured such an arrangement. But the despatch of an army into Scotland, and the burning of Edinburgh, was not the best way of wooing. Henry's tyrannical ways ruined a possible chance of peaceful union.

At home Henry in his last years was as tyrannical as ever, and as resolutely orthodox. The burning of Anne Askew, a lady of high connexions, for heretical opinions, showed that the king was still mercilessly orthodox. The marriage (1540) and execution (1542) of his fifth wife, Catherine Howard, showed that he was still suffering from the perversity of the wayward sex. The attainder of the first of English nobles, the Duke of Norfolk, and his son, the poet Earl of Surrey, who had indulged in foolish talk

about his nearness to the royal house, showed that the most powerful were not exempt from the terrors of the despot. Surrey lost his head. Norfolk's remained on his shoulders only because the despot died suddenly (Jan. 1547) before his execution could be carried out.

The splendid and gallant prince who had won all hearts at his accession had developed during the second half of his reign into a ruthless, perfidious and hypocritical tyrant. Yet it is not hard to understand why it was that he was able to retain to the end the loyal affection of the mass of his subjects. They did not know all the meanness and ugliness of his acts, which are disclosed to us. Through all the horrors he remained a masterful and kingly figure, steering the ship of State through perilous channels with a firm hand. The great changes which he carried through were, on the whole, not unwelcome to his people; and they laid the blame for what was manifestly wrong upon the ministers who seemed to abuse the royal confidence. Bloodshed was lightly regarded by a generation whose fathers had lived through the Wars of the Roses. Religious intolerance was for that and many later generations a virtue rather than a crime. If Henry was a despot, at least his despotism maintained order; and amid all his cruelties to great and prominent people the ordinary machinery of the law went on unswervingly, meting out an even-handed justice in the disputes of common folk such as had perhaps never been known in England before. The land was prosperous, though it had its social troubles. It was strong to meet all dangers, on land and sea, and respected and feared among the nations. Unlike other lands, it never saw the tide of foreign invasion, or (except in the Pilgrimage of Grace), the worse troubles of civil war. It was guided securely through all the dangers and distresses of the great religious change, which caused so much misery and suffering in other countries. The man who achieved all this was a great man, if a hateful one; and the formidable and sinister personality of Henry VIII., founder of the English navy and organiser of the national Church, must rank high among the builders of English strength.

§ 5. *Edward VI. and Protestantism Triumphant, 1547-1553.*

Edward was nine years old when his father died, and therefore could not wield the vast personal power which his father had wielded. Parliament was too well schooled

to dream of resuming its old authority. The Privy Council was filled with industrious underlings, afraid of responsibility. Inevitably, therefore, the dictatorship to which the country had learned to submit fell to the individual who was able to grasp it. It naturally fell first to the king's uncle, Earl of Hertford and later Duke of Somerset, whom Henry VIII. had named in his will as Protector of the young king.

Somerset was a man of generous instincts, inspired by sincere ideals, and he had a strong leaning towards the Protestant side in the religious controversy. He had a refreshing belief in the value of liberty, and resolved to dispense with the terrific engine of despotism which Henry VIII. and Cromwell had created. Guided by him, the first Parliament of Edward VI. rescinded the Act which gave the force of law to royal proclamations, and thus resumed its legislative powers. It abolished the monstrous extensions of the definition of treason which had been made during the previous reign. It cancelled the ferocious persecuting Act of the Six Articles, and even the ancient statute *de hæretico comburendo*: religious persecution was to cease in England. The immediate result was an inrush of Protestant preachers, foreigners and exiled Englishmen. Many of them came with far fiercer and more definite ideas than their predecessors. For in the meanwhile the 'fighting doctrine' of Protestantism, which tolerated no compromise or palterings with princes, had been worked out by Calvin, in the free city of Geneva, which he had dominated since 1540. Eager and violent religious discussion began to be heard in England, as never before since the time of Wycliffe; and disorder followed in its train. It did not much affect the stolid mind of England as a whole; but it largely increased the number of fervid Protestants in London and the south-east, who desired the introduction of sweeping changes. Hitherto their numbers had been negligible.

It was under the Protectorship of Somerset that Archbishop Cranmer first dared to let his real sympathies be plainly seen. The religious policy of the country was in fact at first determined mainly by these two; they for the first time made the Reformation in England something more than a mere political device. In 1549, after full discussion, the English Church obtained a full order of service in the English language by the first issue of the Book of Common Prayer. This was almost wholly Cranmer's

work; and its exquisite grave beauty forms the real title to greatness of that gentle and weak man. He had given to his countrymen something that they could make a part of themselves, something that rose high above the squabbles over doctrine which surrounded its birth, and that could command the allegiance not merely of men's intellects but of their hearts. The first version of the Book of Common Prayer was imposed upon all English churches by the Act of Uniformity of 1549. It was intended to moderate the storm of religious controversy, and the doctrines implied in it were not violently out of sympathy with the old beliefs. But, taken in conjunction with the freedom allowed to the preachers, it produced a rebellion in Devon and Cornwall, where loyalty to the old faith was still strong.

It was not only in religion that Somerset tried new paths. He felt also much sympathy with the complaints of the peasantry against the enclosure movement, and let his sympathies be openly seen. When, therefore, a revolt broke out in Norfolk, headed by a well-to-do tanner, Robert Kett, whose object was the restriction of enclosures, Somerset was drawn in two directions by his sympathies with the rebels and his sense of the necessity of maintaining order. He let the rising attain formidable dimensions, and it was only by the vigorous action of his chief rival in the council, the Earl of Warwick, that it was finally suppressed. This lost him the sympathy of the new nobility and the country gentry, on whose support the Tudor monarchy mainly rested, and who were chiefly responsible for, and profited by, the enclosures. Thus in his management of domestic affairs Somerset's good intentions had led to unhappy results. In this age of rapid change and unrest a firm hand was still needed; and the hard efficient tyranny of Henry VIII. yielded, in the eyes of most men, better results than the mild slipshod rule of his brother-in-law.

Nor was Somerset's management of foreign affairs any more happy. In Scotland he endeavoured to continue Henry VIII.'s policy, and led an army over the Border to compel the Scots to give their young queen in marriage to the young English king. He won a victory at Pinkie (1547). But force is a poor argument, and the result of the victory was to throw the Scots again into the arms of France, and to give the young Mary as wife to a French prince—an event which was to lead to very dangerous results. Again, he drifted into a war with France (1549). The war was badly conducted, largely because Henry VIII.

had left an almost empty treasury in spite of his plunderings and confiscations; and the chief outcome was the loss of Henry's conquest of Boulogne. At home and abroad inefficiency and confusion seemed to reign; men realised how valuable had been the masterful competence of Henry VIII.

These gathering discontents enabled Somerset's chief rival, the Earl of Warwick (later Duke of Northumberland), to supplant him (1549); and although Somerset was allowed to survive until January 1552, when he was judicially murdered in the manner made familiar under Henry VIII., the real ruler of England during the last four years of Edward's reign was Northumberland.

The new dictator had none of Somerset's generous instincts. His power depended upon the remarkable personal influence which he wielded over the boy king, and upon the purchased support of a party of nobles and officials. To satisfy his own greed, and to keep his supporters in good temper, the treasury was so despoiled that neither fleets nor armies could be kept efficient, and the safety and order of the country were imperilled. For the same purposes, the plunder of Church property continued more flagrantly than ever. In 1547 the very numerous small endowments called 'chantries' had been suppressed; they had commonly been attached to parish churches, and provided maintenance for a priest, whose duty was to pray for the souls of the founder and his family, and often also to keep school for poor children. The proceeds of the chantries were intended to be devoted largely to education, and the grammar schools which bear the name of Edward VI. mainly came from this source. But Northumberland intercepted the greater part of the funds, and used them for his own ends. He also seized and sold many of the lands of bishoprics, and confiscated the jewels and plate of churches. He re-established in a large degree the reign of terror which Somerset had abandoned, and made new treason laws. On the question of enclosures he refused all concessions to the popular complaints, and gave full legal sanction to the enclosures, because he wanted the support of their makers.

On the religious question, knowing that he could expect no backing from the Catholics, he deliberately adopted an extreme Protestant policy, all the more readily because the precocious young king prided himself upon his reforming views. The Prayer Book of 1549, which had been capable of a Catholic interpretation, was revised in an entirely Protestant sense (1552). Cranmer was encouraged

to draw up a statement of belief in Forty-Two Articles, which was definitely Protestant in character, especially in its complete rejection of transubstantiation; and this creed was enforced by a new Act of Uniformity. For his private ends, and without any sincere religious convictions, Northumberland was forcing England into extreme Protestantism. The mystery of the Mass, which had been a part of the life of all men for many centuries, was suddenly abolished in every parish church by a mere edict of government. But though the ultra-Protestant party was loud and vigorous, especially in London, the slow-moving mind of the country was by no means ready for such sweeping changes.

Parliament became ominously restive. Northumberland dared not ask it for money. It even plucked up its courage to throw out a whole group of government bills. Tudor Parliaments were 'subservient' only so long as they believed that the country was being fairly and efficiently governed. But still more marked were the expressions of dissatisfaction throughout the country. Throughout the years of Northumberland's rule there were sporadic risings in almost every county. To keep them in check Northumberland found it necessary to permit some of the greater nobles to raise troops of cavalry at the public expense; and in every county lords-lieutenant were established to maintain public order. This became a permanent institution, and survives to-day; though the lords-lieutenant of to-day have only formal and ceremonial duties. Lastly, even in the Privy Council, though Northumberland had carefully purged and packed it, there was disunion and distrust. For the lords of the council realised with fear the deep and dangerous game which the dictator was playing; a game which, if they backed it, would make them guilty of high treason, while if they opposed it, and it nevertheless succeeded, they would assuredly be exposed to the penalties of high treason.

Universally hated, except by the small group of Protestant extremists, Northumberland knew that his position was only safe so long as he wielded the power of the Crown. But the young king was ailing, and obviously could not live long. If his sister Mary, the Catholic princess, succeeded, Northumberland was doomed. His only hope was in filling the throne with some one whom he controlled. If Mary and Elizabeth were passed over as illegitimate, and if Mary of Scotland (granddaughter of Henry VIII.'s elder sister) were passed over as a foreigner, the next heir

would be the representative of Henry VIII.'s younger sister, who had married the Duke of Suffolk. Her granddaughter was the gentle and cultivated Lady Jane Grey. Northumberland resolved to marry this lady to his son, Guilford Dudley, and to make the young king devise the throne to her by will. It was a daring plan. But in face of the universal reprobation of the country it could never have succeeded. Edward VI. died on July 6, 1553, before Northumberland's plans were quite ripe. By July 21 Queen Mary, daughter of the cruelly misused Catherine of Aragon, had secured the throne, and Northumberland was in the Tower. The four years of his power were like a bad dream, and the nation rejoiced that it was over. But a worse nightmare was about to begin.

§ 6. *Mary and the Catholic Reaction, 1553-1558.*

The new queen was thirty-eight years old. Since her fourteenth year she had lived under the shadow of the cruel wrong that had been done to her proud Spanish mother, with whom she had spent the years when girlhood passed into womanhood. She had been unjustly declared illegitimate. She had been excluded from the natural surroundings of a royal princess, and enveloped in an atmosphere of hostility and intrigue. Her sole consolations had been her passionate belief in her mother's cause, her pride in her near relation to the Emperor and King of Spain, and above all her sense that she, like her mother, had suffered as a martyr for the faith. Now, after many dangers, she had been brought to the throne, as by the very finger of God. She entered upon her new task with a very solemn feeling that it was her mission to restore England to the ancient Church, and that in this task her natural ally was the royal house of Spain, from which her mother had sprung. She was the most sincere and disinterested of all the Tudors; but just because her mind was fixed on a single aim, she lacked the instinctive understanding of national sentiment which was the strength of her father and her sister. Her life had put her out of touch with the moods and needs of the age. Therefore she failed tragically; and she knew that she had failed, though with Tudor courage and obstinacy she pursued her aim to the end.

At first she acted moderately. Northumberland suffered on the scaffold; as he deserved, after a base recantation of his Protestant opinions; but there were no other victims

during the first six months of the reign. The full restoration of Catholic practice could not be carried out until Parliament had rescinded the Protestant legislation of Edward VI.'s reign; and the undoing of Henry VIII.'s breach with Rome had to be still more cautiously approached. Meanwhile Mary had to use the royal supremacy (though she regarded it as sacrilege) to displace Cranmer and other reforming bishops, and to re-establish the Mass. The queen found Parliament very difficult to manage: she held three elections in the first eighteen months of her reign in the hope of getting an amenable house; and although she got her own way she had to go warily. Nothing could show how deeply rooted the parliamentary system was in England more clearly than the fact that even a Tudor sovereign, backed by the might of Spain, dared not dispense with it or override it.

But the main event of Mary's first year was the announcement of the queen's intention to marry her cousin Philip, son and heir of Charles V, to whose dominions in Spain, Italy and the Netherlands Philip succeeded when Charles abdicated in 1555. Though the relations between England and Spain, and still more between England and the Netherlands, had long been friendly, the announcement was received with consternation. For it seemed to promise that England would be absorbed in the vast Spanish monarchy, just as Scotland appeared to have been practically annexed to France by the marriage of her young queen to the French Dauphin; and the prospect outraged the strong national feeling of England. From this moment fear and hatred of Spain began to grow among the English. It went on growing in strength until it culminated in the Armada fight. It changed the direction of English policy, and did more than anything else to make Protestantism a national creed. But Mary's heart was set upon the match. She disregarded the advice of many of her most loyal friends, like Bishop Gardiner and Cardinal Pole. She was not deterred by the manifest dissatisfaction of Parliament. Not even a formidable rebellion, (Jan.-Feb. 1554), organised by Sir Thomas Wyatt among the gentry and yeomanry of Kent, specifically as a protest against the marriage, made her pause; though Wyatt nearly made himself master of London, and threatened the government more seriously than it had ever been threatened during the sixteenth century. The only result of Wyatt's rebellion was that the long-delayed vengeance

against the partners or instruments of Northumberland was put into effect. Among the victims was the gentle, beautiful and cultivated Lady Jane Grey, little over sixteen years old, who met her death with a calm fortitude that made it one of the most affecting scenes in Tudor history. Her death was as great an iniquity as that of Sir Thomas More, and sanctified the cause of Protestantism as much as his had sanctified the cause of Catholicism.

It was in 1554 and 1555 that the religious revolution of Henry VIII. was undone. Parliament was persuaded, not without difficulty, to repeal Henry's anti-papal legislation, and to petition for readmission to the Roman communion. Cardinal Pole, an Englishman of noble family who had been exiled and attainted by Henry for his loyalty to the ancient faith, was relieved of his attainder, was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in place of Cranmer, and undertook the direction of the queen's religious policy. The old fierce heresy laws, which Somerset had destroyed, were re-enacted, and the bishops and the government were thus empowered by Parliament to inaugurate a regime of persecution. But on one point Parliament flatly refused to yield. It would not agree to restore the confiscated monastic property; and only that small part of the plunder of the Church which had remained in possession of the Crown was disgorged. The feeling that their lands were endangered made the gentry at any rate very half-hearted in their support of the religious reaction.

Now began a fierce crusade for the extirpation of Protestantism by fire and sword. It began in February 1555, and continued (with significant pauses during the sessions of Parliament) throughout the rest of the reign. Men and women were publicly burnt, singly or in batches, suffering extreme tortures, in most cases with amazing heroism. Even dead heretics were taken from their graves to be burnt. The most notable of the Protestant martyrs were the four chief Protestant bishops, Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and Hooper. Hooper, the most extreme of the Edwardian bishops, was the first to suffer, in his own episcopal city of Gloucester; Ridley and Latimer followed at Oxford, dying in company. Cranmer, the protagonist of the Anglican Reformation, and the chief author of the Prayer Book, suffered last (1556), delayed until his sentence was pronounced by the Pope. Before his death he recanted seven times, not wholly from cowardice, though naturally he was a timid man, but partly because he profoundly believed in the necessity of submission to the

royal will. His courage returned to him before death; he calmly held in the flames, to be first burnt, the unworthy hand that had signed his recantation; and in the act of death gave a new sanctity to the noble and beautiful Book of Prayer which was his greatest gift to his people. With all his faults, he was a good man, condemned by a hard fate to live in an age too ruthless for his gentle temper.

The fires of Smithfield were meant to destroy Protestantism in England. They had the opposite effect. 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church,' and the flames largely redeemed the English Reformation from the rather sordid associations which had hitherto weighed it down. The memory of these martyrdoms was seared into the mind of the English people, and the mark they left has been indelible. They gave birth to the fierce, bitter, unreasoning hatred of Rome and all her works which has ever since been a factor in English life. Yet in comparison with what went on in other countries the Marian persecution was extraordinarily light. Elsewhere the victims of fanaticism, Roman or Protestant, were numbered by thousands. Not more than three hundred lost their lives in England during the three years over which the persecution extended. And these were nearly all in a single district—London and the south-eastern counties. Except a single case at Chester, there was no execution in England north of the Trent, and except one case at Exeter there was none in the south-west. But London and the south-east formed in this age, and for a long time to come, the dominating section of England—the area where wealth was greatest, education most advanced, and population most dense. The main results, therefore, of Mary's reign, were a wider sympathy for the ideas of the reformers than had ever existed before, a burning hatred of Rome, and a growing fear of Spain.

These feelings were already reflecting themselves in Mary's parliaments. They did not yet dream of trying to control or alter the government. But they gave an increasing opposition to its measures. And this opposition was intensified when England found herself drawn at the heels of Spain into a war with France, in which King Philip showed himself entirely negligent of English interests, and while winning victories on his own account allowed the precious possession of Calais to fall to a French attack (1558). This was the crowning humiliation of a bitter and tragical reign. Too late, deserted and deceived by the husband for whom she had sacrificed so much, disappointed

of her hopes of an heir, and recognising that she had failed in her supreme aim, Mary realised that she, an English-woman and a Tudor, had brought nothing but misery and humiliation to her country. She died in the year of the fall of Calais, almost at the same moment as her friend and helper, Cardinal Pole; and on that sad November night 'all the churches in London did ring, and men did make bonfires and set tables in the street, and did eat and drink, and make merry for the new queen.'

§ 7. *The Elizabethan Settlement.*

To find a settlement for the religious question was now more difficult than it had ever been, for there were comparatively few men left to whom this was a merely political question, as it had been to the majority in the time of Henry VIII. Passions had been aroused to intensity by the events of the last two reigns; the number of Protestants, and the number of those who regarded the papal supremacy as an article of faith, had both increased, at the expense of that middle body who could be called 'Nationalist Catholics.' Moreover the same thing was happening on the Continent. The great movement known as the Counter-Reformation, which gave a new fervour of conviction to those of the Roman obedience, was actively at work; on the Protestant side the strong and unflinching doctrines of Calvinism were in the ascendent; and the exiles of both parties who had fled abroad during the last two reigns returned far more violent partisans than they had left. It is probable that the Protestants were in the majority in the south and east of England, but the Catholics had certainly the upper hand in the north and west. Yet it was essential for the safety of England that national unity should be maintained, and national unity would be easily destroyed by any vehement religious controversy. The political situation at the opening of Elizabeth's reign was extremely precarious. England, exposed to dangers from France on the one hand and Spain on the other, seemed to be 'like a bone between two dogs.'

The new queen was extraordinarily well fitted to deal with such a situation. Though she was only twenty-five, she had already steered a course through every kind of peril. She was clever, quick-witted, secretive, without scruple as to the means she used, an adept at conveying impressions without committing herself. She prided herself

upon her purely English and Welsh blood ; no sovereign has ever ruled England, since the Norman conquest, in whom there was so small a strain of foreign blood ; and to keep her England purely English was the beginning and end of her policy, the aim of all the bewildering tacks and veers with which she steered her way through the perils that surrounded her. She had probably no sincere religious opinions ; if she kissed with impressive fervour the Bible that was presented to her as she rode through London to her coronation, she kept a crucifix in her private chapel ; but she did both things for political reasons. It is probable that she was a natural sceptic, devoid of religious emotion. But this meant that she had little patience with the wranglings of the sects. It meant also that she could have no credence in the incomprehensible mystery of the Mass.

Many expected a complete and sudden reversal of Mary's policy, and were disappointed that it did not take place. But Mary's laws were still *Laws* ; there was no interference with Catholic services until Parliament had made them illegal ; and not a single bishop, not even the persecuting Bonner of London, was displaced otherwise than by his own voluntary resignation. The religious settlement was left to be made by Parliament, and by a Parliament which was apparently quite freely elected ; even the Marian bishops were allowed to take their part freely in the discussion, as members of the House of Lords. There were long debates before a decision was arrived at ; there was almost an open breach between the two houses ; and bitter complaints were made of the frequent changes proposed by government in the measures which they introduced. In the end two Acts were passed. The first was an Act of Supremacy, which revived the control of the Crown over the Church ; but Elizabeth declined to accept the title 'Supreme Head of the Church,' over which so much controversy had raged. She preferred the more colourless title of 'Governor.' The second act was an Act of Uniformity, which restored the authority of the second Prayer Book of Edward VI. But a few skilful changes were made in the book, which had the effect of making it more inoffensive to Romanists, so much so that an eminent Spaniard asserted that it contained not a word inconsistent with Catholic belief.

Elizabeth was as cautious in using her power over the Church as in designing it. She left the actual direction of Church affairs mainly to the bishops, though she watched

them. She did not emphasise the royal supremacy as Henry had done. She avoided as far as possible all downright definitions of doctrine, and her Thirty-nine Articles, the final creed of the Anglican Church, issued in 1563, were as carefully vague, for the most part, as her revised Prayer Book. Her settlement has been described as Catholic, as Lutheran, as Zwinglian and as Calvinist. She rejoiced in this indefiniteness, and made great play with it. It was not for her, she said, to 'open windows into her subjects' hearts,' and so long as they did not openly repudiate the ordinances established by government she did not disturb them. Not a single life was taken on religious grounds during the first seventeen years of her reign; and that is an extraordinary tribute to her government, in an age when, on both sides, fanatical persecution raged.

An obvious compromise, such as that of 1559, could arouse no fervour. But it maintained peace and unity, and enabled England to pass unscathed and triumphant through a great crisis. And as the crisis developed, and as the passionate national feeling of the English passed from success to success, the national religion, which was, to begin with, more national than religious, won for itself a genuine loyalty and fervour of belief. The beautiful forms of prayer that men had used in the days of dread when the Armada was approaching English shores, and when their anxiety was lifted by the news that it had been broken and dissipated, thenceforward commanded a devotion that was no longer half-hearted or forced. The Anglican Reformation was completed.

[Fisher's *England from the Accession of Henry VII. to the death of Henry VIII.* and Pollard's *England from the Death of Henry VIII. to the Death of Elizabeth* (both volumes of the Political History of England) supply the best modern survey of the period. See also Lindsay's *History of the Reformation*, Pollard's *Henry VIII.* and *The Protector Somerset*, Froude's *History of England* (brilliantly written, partial and one-sided, but more vivid than any other book on the period), R. W. Dixon's *History of the Church of England*, Gairdner's *Lollardy and the Reformation*, Merriman's *Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell*, Gasquet's *Eve of the Reformation, Henry VIII. and the Monasteries*, and *Edward VI. and the Prayer-book*, Pollard's *Factors in Modern History*, Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, Meredith's *Economic History of England*.]

CHAPTER VI

THE REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND

(A.D. 1528-1561)

James v., 1513: Mary, 1542.

§ 1. *Scotland in the Sixteenth Century.*

IN all the countries which were affected by it the Reformation brought great changes. But in none did it exercise a more powerful influence than in Scotland. It changed the course of Scottish history. It brought to a close the long conflict between Scotland and England. It transformed the character of the Scottish people. And for one brief period it made the domestic concerns of this small and poor country a matter of the most vital importance for all the great States of Europe. If the Scottish Reformation had not achieved its triumph in the year 1560, it is probable that the whole history of the islands and of Europe would have been widely different.

Scotland in the early sixteenth century was, what it had been for hundreds of years, a land torn asunder by the incessant strife of feudal nobles, border raiding chieftains and Highland clans. Its history was made up of wild stories of fierce family vendettas and ruthless private war. Even the ablest of its kings had never succeeded in maintaining peace or firm government. Most of them had died violent deaths, while still young, leaving infant heirs to be wrangled over by the magnates. The far too numerous nobles, confident in the loyalty of their retainers, were often able to defy the royal justice. The nominal Parliament of Scotland was in reality little more than an assembly of nobles: though the burghs sent representatives, they had little or no influence, and the middle-class of landed gentry had long ceased to take part in these meetings.

Although the country was by no means so wretched as these facts would suggest, it was extremely poor, and its trade and industry were negligible. One thing only promised well for the future: the Scots were already a well educated people—perhaps more generally educated than

any other people in Europe. Their zeal for learning was shown by the large number of young Scots who wandered abroad to Paris and elsewhere, in search of learning—like the famous scholar, George Buchanan (1506-1582), who had the reputation of being the greatest Latinist of his age. It was shown also by the fact that Scotland already possessed three universities, all founded during the fifteenth century. They were poor and ill-endowed, and ranked far behind great seats of learning like Paris and Oxford. But there were three of them—three for a population of much less than a million.

In the divided and feud-torn condition of this small, barren land, one thing alone maintained a real unity: the passionate devotion of the Scots to the national independence which they had spent so much blood to defend during three centuries of almost incessant war with England, and of loyal friendship with France. This hostility to England, and this friendship with France, were the strongest things in the Scottish tradition. Yet they had brought many ills upon the land; and perhaps the greatest had been the appalling disaster of Flodden Field (1513), which was due mainly to the chivalrous desire of James IV. to go to the aid of France when she was attacked by England.

During the reign of James V. (1513-1542), which covered the greater part of the reign of his uncle, Henry VIII., the traditional features of Scottish history still continued. The years of James' minority were filled with the warfare of his turbulent nobles; the years of his active reign were filled with a desperate struggle to reduce them to obedience. And in spite of the fact that his mother was the sister of the English king, James V. steadfastly pursued the traditional Scottish policy of friendship with France and hostility to England. Both his first and his second wives were French princesses—the second being Mary of Guise, a member of a family that was to play a prominent part in French and European history. And, as so often before, the declaration of war between England and France was always the signal for war between England and Scotland. When Henry VIII. attacked France in 1523 an English army ravaged the Scottish Lowlands, and over a large area left (according to Wolsey's report) 'neither house, fortress, village, tree, cattle, corn, or other succour for man.' When in 1542 England once more went to war, an English army once more ravaged the eastern borders of Scotland, and a Scottish host was organised to invade the western borders

of England. But the Scots met such a disastrous and humiliating defeat at Solway Moss that the sheer shame and vexation of it killed the unhappy young king—not yet thirty-one years old. Very manifestly this traditional policy was bringing nothing but evil to Scotland.

During this reign, indeed, there began to grow up in Scotland, for the first time, a considerable party favourable to an alliance with England. It drew its strength partly from the rebellious nobles who resented James v.'s attempts to subdue them, but there were also many Scots who honestly felt that this ceaseless enmity was ruinous and ought to be ended: and if Henry VIII. had been less high-handed, less untrustworthy, and more conciliatory in his relations with his nephew, the national friendship of the sister nations might have been sealed in these years. But James v. always felt that his uncle was intriguing against him with his nobles. And as he had alienated most of these nobles, he was driven back upon the support of the Church. His chief adviser was the shrewd, able, immoral Archbishop Beton. But in the eyes of Beton, as of all churchmen, the heretic Henry was an enemy to be resisted to the last; all the more because heresy was beginning to get a dangerous foothold in Scotland. Thus the unhappy James v. was driven by his alliance with the Church into hostility both to England and to Protestantism. And thus also the Protestant cause was almost from the first linked, in the eyes of most Scotsmen, with the policy of friendship towards England. It was the development of the Reformation which was to bring the two nations, after so many centuries of strife, into a partnership which was to be indissoluble.

There was no country more ready than Scotland for religious revolution, because there was no country in which the Church was in a more unhealthy condition. It owned about half of the little kingdom's wealth. But its bishops were mostly members of noble houses, as violent and unruly as their friends, in whose feuds they readily joined. Its priests and monks and friars were notoriously ignorant and corrupt; and the Scottish literature of the period—which was much more lively and vigorous than the contemporary literature of England—was full of searching satire against them. Lollardy, coming from England, had found a ready welcome a century earlier, and had never died out: it was strongest in the Western Lowlands, the district from which Knox later drew his steadiest support, and which later

still became the stronghold of the Covenanters. Now preachers of Lutheranism and Lutheran books were beginning to appear in the country. In 1525 the Scottish Parliament found it necessary to pass an Act against the heretical literature which was being freely imported. In 1528—the year before the meeting of the Reformation Parliament in England—the first Scottish Protestant martyr, Patrick Hamilton, was burnt at the stake; and Knox dated from this event the beginning of the Scottish Reformation. But this did not stop the dissemination of the new ideas; there were not many burnings, but that was perhaps mainly because the preachers were protected by powerful nobles. Certainly the yeast was working in Scotland during the years when Henry VIII. was bringing about the severance of the English Church from Rome. And naturally those who sympathised with the new ideas tended also to favour the idea of making friends with England.

§ 2. *Scotland, England and France.*

When James V. died his crown passed to an infant daughter, born only a few days before his death—Mary Queen of Scots, who thus began her tragic career under the most tragic auspices. This meant that unhappy Scotland was once more sentenced to all the miseries of a long minority, with its accompaniment of unending strife between factions of nobles. But in some ways the strife was now more embittered than ever. There was the usual unrelenting feud between the two great houses whose strife had long torn Scotland asunder—the Hamiltons, led by the Earl of Arran, and the Douglasses, led by the Earl of Angus; and with this were mixed up many other family feuds. But there was also the strife between the French party and the English party, and the intensifying conflict between the Protestant party and the Church party.

To Henry VIII. the succession of an infant princess seemed a wonderful opportunity. He conceived the plan of marrying Mary to his son Edward. And so strong was the growing feeling of the disastrous results of Anglo-Scottish hostility that the Regent Arran, who had Protestant leanings, was persuaded to agree to a treaty whereby the young queen was to marry the Prince of Wales as soon as she reached her tenth year. But Scotland was not yet ready for so complete a reversal of her traditional policy; patriotic Scots felt that after such a marriage Scotland

would become no better than a province of England. The churchmen especially regarded with alarm the prospect of an extension of the influence of English heresy. Cardinal Beton took the lead of the French party, and the Regent Arran, a very weak personage, was persuaded to throw over the English treaty, and practically to put himself in Beton's hands. For the next four years (1542-6), though Arran continued to be Regent, Beton was the real ruler of Scotland, and the national leader in a desperate resistance against England.

If Henry had shown patience and forbearance he would have strengthened the hands of the English party, and even if the marriage fell through he might have made a lasting friendship between the two nations. But his tyrannical nature would not brook resistance. He resolved to teach the Scots a lesson. He resorted to the argument of brute force, which is always the worst of arguments with a high-spirited people; and during the remainder of his reign his armies inflicted upon Scotland worse miseries, perhaps, than she had ever endured. In 1544 an English fleet brought an English army to Leith, and Edinburgh was given to the flames. In 1545, though the Scots obtained a success at Ancrum, a new English invasion wrought still more brutal havoc. Melrose and other abbeys were destroyed; five market towns and 243 villages were burnt; and the harvests of whole counties were ruined. This was Henry's mode of showing that friendship between England and Scotland was desirable. As might have been expected, it only had the effect of closing up the ranks of the Scots, and practically destroying the party which favoured friendship with England.

After Henry VIII.'s death the Protector Somerset (who had led the expeditions of 1544 and 1545) still persisted in pursuing the policy of force; and he seemed now to have a better chance of success, because in 1546 Cardinal Beton, the leader of the Scottish national resistance, had been murdered. Somerset led a great army into Scotland, in order to compel the Scots to hand over their young queen as a bride for Edward VI., and won a crushing victory at Pinkie (1547). But this method of wooing only strengthened the determination of the Scots not to yield. It drove them to seek the protection of France, as the only means of saving the independence of Scotland. In 1548 a French army of occupation arrived. But the French king demanded a price for his protection; and a treaty was

signed whereby the little queen ^{*} was to be sent to France for safety, there to be married to the heir to the French crown. Some of the Scottish nobles were aware of the danger to Scottish independence threatened by this arrangement. But there seemed to be no alternative, and the Estates accepted the treaty 'with one voice.' When the beautiful little six-year-old queen arrived in France in August 1548, the French king exclaimed: 'Now France and Scotland are one State.' And so it appeared to be. For the next twelve years Scotland was practically a province of France. Her young queen, daughter of a French mother, was to spend the most impressionable years of her life amid the intrigues of the licentious French court, married to a sickly prince whom she could not but despise, and entirely out of touch with the events that were transforming the life and character of her own country. That is the second act in the tragedy of Mary.

§ 3. *John Knox and the Religious Revolution.*

Meanwhile, however, though the tyrannical policy of Henry VIII. had ruined for the time the chance of friendship between the two countries, and had made the Protestant cause appear unpatriotic in Scotland, Protestantism was still growing in strength. During the years when Henry was ravaging the country, a great preacher, George Wishart, a fervid, learned, eloquent man, who had been driven from the country in 1538, and had now returned after visiting the centres of Protestantism on the Continent, was daring the terrors of the flames, and preaching the new doctrine under the protection of some of the nobles. In 1546 he came to Haddington. Here one of his hearers was an earnest and brave priest, some forty years old, called John Knox; ¹ a man of such resolute and unbending courage that, once he was converted, no terrors would dissuade him. But Haddington was in Cardinal Beton's diocese; and by his orders Wishart was seized and burnt in front of the Cardinal's own castle at St. Andrews. Three months later a group of desperate men, brought together by a mixture of religious and political motives with personal hatred, broke into the castle, murdered the Cardinal, and hung his dead body over the castle wall before the eyes of the citizens. Then they prepared themselves for resistance. They were besieged by the Regent, and as their act was generally con-

¹ There is a short life of John Knox by F. MacCunn.

demned they had no hope of relief. But they held out for more than a year. During that period the castle of St. Andrews became a place of refuge for all sorts of fugitives ; and among others John Knox, who had been hunted from place to place as a heretic, came to join them, and preached sermons to them that brought them to tears. The castle was not captured until a French fleet with heavy guns was brought against it. Most of its captured inhabitants were carried off to France, and sentenced to labour as chained slaves in the French galleys. Among these galley-slaves was John Knox. He remained chained to the oar for nineteen months. Then he escaped and took refuge in England, where he became one of the most strenuous of the reforming preachers under Edward VI., and was offered and refused a bishopric. Before long he had again to flee, in order to escape from the persecution of Queen Mary. He betook himself to Geneva, where he learnt from the great Calvin the stern system of theology which he was to introduce into Scotland. Such was the training of the grim, fearless, powerful spirit who was to play a chief part in remoulding the character of the Scottish people, and in bringing about the partnership of the sister nations.

While Knox was labouring at the oar or preaching in England, Scotland was being turned into a province of France. French armies cleared the soil of English invaders ; but they also made themselves its real masters. And the result of the French ascendancy was that in 1554 the French queen-mother, Mary of Guise, became Regent in place of Arran, who was compensated by the grant of a French duchy. Mary of Guise was an exceedingly able woman ; and her policy was to turn Scotland into an appanage of France. The most important offices of State were held by Frenchmen. All the chief fortresses, except Edinburgh Castle, were garrisoned by French troops. This was an invasion of Scottish independence more grave than had ever been known since the time of Edward I. In a very short time the dread of France had become as strong among the Scots as the dread of England had ever been. Opposition began to organise itself. And as Mary of Guise was a strict Catholic, in close alliance with the Church, the opposition was naturally inclined to take the Protestant side. Protestantism, which had seemed unpatriotic when Henry VIII. was ravaging the Lowlands, now became the patriot creed, and this made its progress far easier. But

unhappily there was not now much hope of aid from England, where the persecution of Mary Tudor was in full blast. To the exiled Knox, who had dreamed of seeing England and Scotland linked by a common loyalty to the new faith, the outlook must have seemed dark indeed; and as he brooded on the evil that was being wrought by Mary of Guise in Scotland, and by Mary Tudor in England, he became convinced that the rule of women had much to do with it. He issued the *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment* (government) of Women—a violent diatribe which did not make him beloved by Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots, with whom he had to work later.

In 1555 John Knox returned, and, during a visit of ten months, not only preached the new faith with extraordinary vigour and success, but did a great deal to organise the opposition to the Regent as at once a Protestant and a Nationalist party. The Regent did not dare to attack him, because she was aware of her growing unpopularity, and because he had the support of a powerful and growing group of nobles. Chief among these was the Lord James Stewart, afterwards Earl of Moray, who was an illegitimate elder brother of the young queen. A steadfast, loyal and honourable young man, he became a convinced Protestant, and was to be the chief support of the Protestant cause. In 1557 a group of these Protestant nobles, henceforward known as the Lords of the Congregation, bound themselves in a solemn covenant never to rest till they had established the reformed religion as the national religion of Scotland. This group became the centre round which gathered all the enthusiasts for Protestantism, and all the patriots who resented French domination. The national feeling more and more supported them, and more and more became identified with the Protestant cause. The Regent dared not attempt to suppress the movement. She did indeed burn one heretic in 1558, but the outcry was so great that she could not venture to go further, and the Protestant preachers became bolder than ever, teaching publicly and openly in Edinburgh and Dundee and other centres.

§ 4. *The Years of Crisis and the Anglo-Scottish Alliance.*

Such was the situation when, in November 1558, Mary Tudor died, and her successor re-established Protestantism in England. This made England the natural ally of the Scottish nationalist and Protestant party. The freedom

of Scotland seemed to depend upon the triumph of Protestantism in England. Not only that, but the safety of England seemed to depend upon the triumph of the Protestant party in Scotland. For Mary Queen of Scots, great-granddaughter of Henry VII., was now, in the eyes of all good Catholics, the legitimate Queen of England; and France saw the dazzling prospect of obtaining supremacy over the whole of Britain. If England were to be invaded from Scotland on the north and from France on the south, and if the invaders were helped by a rising of the numerous English Catholics, it seemed certain that Elizabeth's throne would fall. Then France, Scotland and England would be united under a single crown. And then, also, heresy would be crushed out in the islands. The only protection which Elizabeth seemed to have a right to hope for was that of Spain, whose king had no desire to see France so greatly aggrandised. But Philip of Spain was torn asunder between his political interests and his desire to see the triumph of Catholicism. It was certain that he would not help France to conquer England. But he might stand aloof. It was an alarming feature of the situation that, in 1559, he made peace with France at Cateau-Cambrésis, and there was a general belief that the two great Catholic sovereigns had agreed to join in crushing out heresy once and for all. And if England and Scotland were subdued, where else in Europe was there any Protestant power capable of resisting the forces of Catholicism?

Thus everything seemed to depend upon the success of the nationalist and Protestant opposition in Scotland. If it could be enabled to win the day, Scotland would be freed from French control, England would be saved from the peril of a French conquest without the necessity of throwing herself upon the support of Spain, and Protestantism would be saved from the danger of extinction, not only in these two countries but throughout Europe. So the eyes of the whole world were turned upon Scotland.

In 1559 the great issue at last came to the test. The Protestant revolt broke into flame over Scotland. The exiled apostle, John Knox, returned to assume the lead (May 1559). His fiery and passionate sermons carried his hearers off their feet, and led, in one town after another, to outbreaks of destructive violence. Mary of Guise saw that she must make a stand before her authority had been completely broken down. She ordered all the preachers to appear before her. The result was that thousands of the

Protestant gentry began to gather in bands for their defence, while the Lords of the Congregation took the lead in a national revolt. And the real leader and inspirer of all was the stern and fearless preacher. English aid was necessary: Knox was the chosen ambassador first sent to persuade Elizabeth to give it. But Elizabeth hesitated—she always hated to commit herself to a definite line of action; and for the best part of a year the Scottish Protestants had to fight their own battle, against the disciplined forces of France. Nevertheless, by the end of 1559, they had succeeded in penning the main force of the Regent into Leith, which they were besieging. But they were only holding their own with difficulty, and were by no means masters of the rest of the country. If a French fleet, with reinforcements and money and supplies, should succeed in getting to Leith, the Regent and the cause of French and Catholic dominance might yet triumph. On January 23, 1560, a fleet of strange vessels appeared in the Firth of Forth. But it was not the expected French fleet. It was an English fleet, sent to cut off the French. Elizabeth had at last made up her mind; and the English fleet had decided this momentous issue, as it was in the future to decide so many more. Scotland owes her freedom and her religion in a large degree to the English navy.

Meanwhile the subtlest of all the Scots, Maitland of Lethington, had concluded with England the treaty which Knox had failed to achieve. An English army advanced to the aid of the Scots, and joined in the siege of Leith, which they found a slow and difficult business. But while they lay before the beleaguered town the Regent Mary of Guise died, and with the death of this brave and able woman the heart went out of the defence. A month later the siege was ended, under the terms of a treaty signed between England, France and the Scottish leaders. Mary Queen of Scots was to cease to use the arms of England. And so long as the queen should remain in France the government was to be in the hands of a commission of twelve Scottish nobles. The treaty of Edinburgh (1560) marks an epoch in the history of the island peoples. For the first time England and Scotland had co-operated in the common interest. The long story of their wars was at an end. Never again were England and Scotland to be arrayed against one another as hostile nations. The English army marched back peacefully through a rejoicing countryside,

followed, as no English army ever had been before, by the gratitude of all Scottish patriots.

§ 5. *The Religious Settlement in Scotland.*

It was now possible for the Scottish leaders to carry out, fully and formally, the religious revolution. At a meeting of the Estates (1560), a Confession of Faith drawn up by Knox and other ministers was formally adopted, the papal jurisdiction was abolished, and the celebration of the Mass forbidden. Henceforth Calvinistic Protestantism was the national creed of Scotland. It is noteworthy that this decision was not accompanied by persecution. There were no burnings of Catholics. The bishops and abbots of the old church were for the most part left in possession of their lands. In spite of the law, the old faith continued to be observed in parts of the country—in some sections of the Highlands it has retained its unchallenged ascendancy to this day. But to complete the settlement, it was necessary not merely to define the creed but to fix the organisation of the new Church. For this purpose John Knox drew up a 'Book of Discipline,' which forms probably the greatest of his achievements. It dealt not merely with the organisation of a Church, but with the life of the whole nation. It suggested a very enlightened scheme of national education, far in advance of anything then existing in the world, and a system of poor relief. It did not arrange for the full Presbyterian system of Church government as it was later developed; that was mainly the work of Andrew Melville in the next generation. But it provided that the minister of each parish should be elected by his people, and that in the government of his church he should be assisted by a body of elected lay elders, the kirk session; it was to be the business of the kirk session to supervise the morals and the family life of the community. At the head of the Church system was to be a General Assembly, including elders as well as ministers, a body which would obviously be far more representative of the whole nation than anything that Scotland had hitherto known. Thus it was not merely a system of Church government which Knox contemplated, but a complete reorganisation of the national life. The Scots were to be a nation of educated men, guided by a trained ministry, and controlling their own spiritual affairs.

'The Book of Discipline' was not adopted by the Estates,

mainly because it could not be carried out unless the wealth of the old Church was used for the organisation of the new ; and the Scottish nobles had no intention of allowing it to be so employed. Most of this wealth was in fact quietly annexed by the nobles during the following generation, and thus some of the most enlightened schemes of Knox could not be carried out : only a bare pittance was left for the maintenance of the clergy. Nevertheless the main features of Knox's scheme were brought into operation, and the system was finally worked out in Andrew Melville's 'Second Book of Discipline,' which was adopted in 1581, and received formal parliamentary sanction in 1592. It was this system which has moulded the mind of modern Scotland.

One main reason for the delay in completing the new system was that the young queen returned to Scotland in the summer of 1561. Her weakling husband had died ; she had had to descend from the French throne ; her mother's family, the Guises, had for the time being lost their influence in France. So the proud, beautiful, passionate girl returned to the rugged land which she had scarcely known, just at the moment when it had adopted a great change, which she could neither understand nor sympathise with. Fresh from the graces of the French court and the glowing hopes of empire, she came to the gloomy capital of a barren land, to be bullied by the rude Scottish nobles and preached at by the grim Reformer, who feared no one, had no patience with court etiquette, and had not changed his opinion about the 'monstrous regiment of women.' The thrilling and tragic story of the following years concerns English and European quite as much as Scottish history, and will be touched on in the next chapter.

But Mary's subtle and daring manœuvres postponed the settlement of the Church. Even when she was safely locked up as Elizabeth's prisoner in England (1568), the legacy of party strife which she had left kept many questions open ; and though the reforming party preserved the ascendancy, they were never able to get a definite settlement of the questions of Church government and Church finance. There were some among the noble politicians who had no love for the democratic system of Presbyterianism ; they would have preferred an episcopal system, and they could use the argument that an episcopal system would ease relations with England. It was not until Mary's son, King James VI. (afterwards James I. of England), had come of age, that a settlement became possible. Even then it was

never frankly accepted. The king disliked the Presbyterian system. He disliked it the more the older he grew. He did not relish the power which it gave to the people. He detested the claim to complete independence of secular control which the ministers of the Kirk boldly put forward. He acutely resented being told, as Andrew Melville did not hesitate to tell him, that in spiritual matters he had no more power than any of his subjects, but was only 'God's silly (simple) vassal.' He struggled untiringly to introduce episcopacy into Scotland, both before and after he succeeded to the English throne. But though, by bullying and corruption, he achieved some temporary success, he was never able to shake the loyalty of the Scots to the system Knox had given them.

For Knox, through his Kirk Sessions and General Assemblies, and the Presbyteries and Synods that grew up later, had called the Scottish people into consultation, had given them the right to decide about the questions that interested them most deeply; the townsman, the farmer, the country gentleman, had learned to value the right of taking a share in great decisions. They were not going to yield it up. All the prickly obstinacy which Scotsmen had for centuries shown in the defence of their national independence, they were now to show in defence of their free system of Church government. Moreover, by the long discussion on theological points, they had been turned into a keen-witted and argumentative people, not to be easily deceived. Henceforward, 'Scotland' means no longer only a group of turbulent nobles: the nobles fall more and more into the background. It means the Scottish nation, a democratic and educated nation, poor, proud, quarrelsome, obstinate, intelligent, and deeply concerned about profound questions. That is the nation which John Knox had shaped.

[Hume Brown's or Andrew Lang's *History of Scotland*; Lindsay's *History of the Reformation*; Hume Brown's *Life of John Knox*; Lang's *Knox and the Reformation*; Pollard's *Factors in Modern History*. There is a masterly chapter on the Reformation in Scotland by F. W. Maitland in the *Cambridge Modern History*. See also Rait's *Relations between England and Scotland*.]

CHAPTER VII

ELIZABETH, MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, AND PHILIP II.

(A.D. 1561-1587)

§ 1. *The Counter-Reformation and the Political Situation in Europe in 1559.*

UNTIL the middle of the sixteenth century the Reformation had advanced in Europe with very little check. But then the leaders of the ancient Church began to realise the dangers of the situation, to set their house in order, and to collect their resources for a struggle against the religious revolution. This movement is known as the Counter-Reformation. It led to a series of desperate and confused wars which lasted for a century. All the conspiracies, rebellions and intrigues which filled the next half century in England, Scotland and Ireland were simply parts of this great conflict. So were the English struggle against Spain, which culminated in the Spanish Armada; and the desperate revolt of the Dutch under William the Silent, which led to the creation of a new free nation; and the confused and bloody wars of religion in France. All these movements were closely intertwined; and the fortunes of the islands in one of the most critical periods of their history cannot be understood without some comprehension of the course and nature of this vast conflict as a whole.

Four main aspects of the Counter-Reformation should be noted. In the first place there was a clear definition of Roman Catholic dogma, of such a kind as to render a reconciliation with the Protestants impossible, and a systematic, and on the whole successful, attempt to remove those corruptions in the Church which had chiefly provoked the Protestant revolt, and which all good Catholics recognised and deplored. This was mainly the work of the Council of Trent, whose sittings were spread, at long intervals, over the quarter of a century from 1542 to 1566: the main work was done in the sessions of 1546, 1562, and 1566. Originally intended to restore the unity of Christendom, the Council was attended only by orthodox Roman Catholics; and its

result was to make the cleavage between the two religions definite and irrevocable, and to give to the Catholic party a clear idea of these differences and a solid unity of aim. In the second place, the further spread of heresy in Catholic countries was checked by the work of the Papal Inquisition, which chiefly affected Italy but also influenced other countries. The Spanish Inquisition, which was quite distinct, and was under the control of the Spanish Crown, did the same work with far greater ferocity for Spain and the Spanish dominions. In all the Catholic countries fierce persecution was raging during the second half of the century, and the Protestant countries soon began to follow suit. In the third place, the foundation of the remarkable Order of Jesuits by the Spaniard Ignatius Loyola placed at the disposal of the Roman Church a very powerful instrument. Established in 1539, the Company of Jesus consisted of a body of men vowed to absolute obedience, and devoted to the forwarding of the Catholic cause by every possible means. Their numbers grew very rapidly, and they spread into all countries. By means of their admirable system of education they obtained a great influence over the young even in Protestant countries. As the father confessors of ruling princes they could influence the course of politics to the advantage of the Church. As missionaries of the faith they showed often incredible heroism in India and in China and among the savages of the New World; and their emissaries never hesitated to dare the stake and the block in Protestant lands in order to confirm the faith of the Catholic remnant and to win new converts. Lastly, the ruling princes who remained loyal to the old faith were stimulated to use their power for its triumph, and every attempt was made to combine them in a great crusade against heresy.

When in 1559 the two greatest monarchs of Europe, Henry II. of France and Philip II. of Spain,¹ ended the long Franco-Spanish wars in the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, it looked as if the triumph of Catholicism were at hand. For there was no power in Europe that could resist these two if they were united. Both were strong Catholics. Both were engaged, in 1559, in rooting out heresy in their own dominions by fire and sword, in the most pitiless persecutions that Europe had yet seen. On the other hand the Protestants were both weak and divided. The military

¹ There is a short life of Philip II., by M. A. S. Hume, in the Foreign Statesmen Series.

strength of the numerous German princes counted for little; moreover they were divided by the conflict between Lutheranism and Calvinism, and the Lutheran princes, who were the majority, thought they were quite safe, and were unwilling to engage in dangerous adventures. Sweden and Denmark also stood aloof from the struggle. England was in 1559 the only considerable power in which Protestantism was officially established; but the brand-new Elizabethan settlement was as yet in a precarious position, and a majority of the population were still Catholic. In Scotland the Protestants were a band of rebels in arms, the government was in Catholic hands, and the queen was herself a Catholic. In Ireland anarchy prevailed, but the mass of the population was still Catholic, and could be made a thorn in the side of England. In the Netherlands there were rumblings of discontent, but the Inquisition was busily engaged in burning heretics in droves, under the shelter of the might of Spain. The prospects of a complete Catholic victory seemed to be very bright. These were the circumstances in which Elizabeth's reign commenced. It is not surprising that amid such perils she walked with very gingerly steps, and hesitated to commit herself to any definite line of action.

But there were two safeguards against these perils. The first was the rivalry of France and Spain. Both hoped to obtain the mastery in Britain, and neither was willing to give a free hand to the other. France seemed to have the best chance in 1559, because she could hope to control Scotland through her queen, and to conquer England, with the aid of the English Catholics, on the ground of Mary's claim to the English crown. This prospect made Philip II. extremely nervous; rather than see such an increase of French power, he preferred to give his protection to Elizabeth, who encouraged him by pretending that she might yet marry a Catholic husband, or go back to the Catholic faith. Counting on this jealousy of France and Spain, it was possible for Elizabeth and the Scottish Protestant leaders to achieve the victory of 1560—to snatch the bone of Scotland from between the jaws of the two quarrelling mastiffs. For the moment—but only for the moment—the independence of both countries was safeguarded by this event.

The second favourable factor in the situation was the fact that both France and Spain were hampered by troubles of their own. In France, since the death of Henry II. (1559),

the court was torn asunder by rival factions, the Guises (Mary Stewart's uncles) and the Bourbons; while the Protestant party, though only a small minority in the country, was very influential, because it included the Bourbons and many great nobles, and was powerful in many of the great trading towns. Civil war on political and religious grounds was already imminent in 1560; and although Elizabeth did not like rebels, she kept in touch with the French Protestant leaders, and when the wars of religion actually began in 1562 she sent an English force to their aid. She did not care whether they won or not; it was enough that France should be kept occupied. She was a most untrustworthy ally. But the French Huguenots were very useful to her. They fought eight civil wars in France during the next forty years, and thus enormously reduced the French danger.

The troubles of Spain were not so serious as those of France. But they were serious enough to make the cautious and slow-moving Philip II. unwilling to launch upon such a difficult enterprise as the conquest of England, and ready to let himself be deceived by Elizabeth's tricks and lies. His main troubles were twofold. On the one hand he had to deal with the Turkish naval power in the Mediterranean. On the other hand he was perplexed by the growing unrest in the Netherlands, where the cruelty of his religious persecution and the generally tyrannical methods of his government were producing more and more violent opposition. There was, indeed, no open revolt in arms until the Duke of Alva was sent in 1567 to drown the discontents of these heretics and agitators in blood; and when the revolt did come, it was ruthlessly and terribly crushed—for the time being. But some of the Dutch rebels, the 'Beggars of the Sea,' escaped and took to piracy on the Narrow Seas. And they were joined by English and French pirates, who continually preyed upon Spanish commerce, using English harbours, to a large extent, as their bases. Elizabeth protested that she was not responsible for, and could not prevent, these activities: the one thing certain is that she did not try, and that she even gave underhand encouragement to more distant piratical adventures at the cost of Spanish commerce, of which we shall see something in the next chapter. Philip, of course, was not altogether deceived by these assurances. But they made him realise (as Elizabeth meant that they should) how completely the communications between Spain and the Netherlands were at the mercy

of England. For the sea route was the only line of connexion. He saw that a war with England would make the complete subjugation of the Netherlands almost impossible. And therefore, even after the danger of a French conquest of England had disappeared, he kept up the forms of friendship: England's turn was not to come until the Netherlands were finally settled. Thus the Netherlands saved England and Scotland, and England saved the Netherlands.

In these circumstances, so long as nothing too violent was done and the forms of friendship with Spain were maintained, Elizabeth might feel fairly secure; and the two British nations were left with a precarious freedom to work out their own destinies. But the working out of events in England and Scotland was manifestly of the most vital importance for the rest of Europe. In both countries the trend of events had identified the cause of Protestantism with the cause of national freedom. And if these causes were defeated—as it was still possible that they might be, even without foreign intervention—then the same causes in the Netherlands, and also elsewhere in Europe, would almost certainly be ruined. If Mary of Scotland could, with the aid of the English Catholics, win the throne of England, not only would there be a religious reaction in both of the British lands, but their weight would be thrown on the Catholic side in the great conflict. And that would be decisive.

Thus issues of the most far-reaching importance turned upon the dramatic rivalry of two young marriageable queens, two cousins, ruling over two sister-nations. Seldom has a purely personal drama had so close a bearing upon world-events.

§ 2. *Elizabeth and Mary, 1561-1571.*

The two cousins were very markedly contrasted. Elizabeth,¹ the virgin queen, was in some ways a man in a woman's body. Though she enjoyed dress and flirting and the grossest flattery, it is doubtful if she ever felt or inspired a deep, personal affection. These things were to her merely relaxation; her heart was in politics, and she had the cool head and masterful will of all the Tudors. She had also their power of judging men and winning their respect and loyalty. She was most faithfully served by a group of

¹ There are short lives of Elizabeth, by E. S. Beesly (in the *Twelve English Statesmen Series*), and by the late Bishop Creighton.

very able and industrious ministers, of whom William Cecil (Lord Burghley) and Francis Walsingham were the best. Yet she loved to play off lesser men such as Leicester against even these trusted councillors: she would let no man feel that he was all-powerful. Her greatest defects were an incurable preference for deceitful methods, and an incurable unwillingness to come to an irrevocable decision: she loved to feel that she had several alternative courses open to her, and Cecil and Walsingham, both of whom desired a definitely Protestant policy, were often exasperated and alarmed by her apparent vacillations. But she knew what she was doing, and her decisions, if generally made at the eleventh hour, were always made before the twelfth. In the very dangerous condition of European politics this habit of hers had its advantages. No one was sure what line she would follow. Her hesitations were in nowise due to lack of courage: in a crisis no one could be cooler. Nor were they due to uncertainty as to her main aim: she meant to keep her England English. That was the ruling passion of her life, with which nothing else was ever allowed to conflict.

Her cousin Mary¹ was far more of a woman. When she returned to Scotland in 1561 she was a young widow of eighteen. She carried about her from the first an atmosphere of romance. She had beauty, grace, gaiety and wit in such abundance that few could resist her charm; it could penetrate even the walls of a prison; it has penetrated through the mist of centuries, so that even to-day learned men will play tricks with the truth for love of her. She had the spirit and bravery of a gallant boy; there was no quality she adored so much as courage, even in a brute like Bothwell, and none that she despised so much as cowardice—that was the undoing of Darnley. She was extremely clever and resourceful; she could play the game of politics with the skill of an old diplomat, and wait patiently, concealing her aims and her disappointments with a smile. But beneath all this was a nature that could be set aflame by passion. Unlike Elizabeth she could be utterly carried away by hatred or by love, and when that happened, all prudence and calculation went to the winds. She threw away the chance of kingdoms for revenge and a worthless lover.

The ten years 1561-1571 are entirely dominated by the charm and passion and cunning of Mary. During these

¹ There is a short life of Mary Queen of Scots, by F. MacCunn.

years Elizabeth found little difficulty in keeping Philip II. friendly: her sailors had not yet begun to do outrageous things; and the storm in the Netherlands was only brewing. France was no longer dangerous, for civil strife had broken out. The real danger to England, and to the Scottish Protestants, came from Mary. At first she was ostentatiously moderate. She only asked to be recognised as Elizabeth's heiress, which Elizabeth refused, saying that to agree would be to sign her own death-warrant. In Scotland, Mary made no attempt to interfere with the Protestant settlement. She made friends with some of the Protestant leaders, including her half-brother, Lord James, whom she made Earl of Moray. She even joined him in an expedition against the Catholic Earl of Huntly in the Highlands. Moray felt sure that in good time she would marry a Protestant and make friends with Elizabeth, and all would be well. She won the hearts of many followers; and, indeed, the idea of putting a Scottish queen on the English throne was attractive to many Scots. The only man who could resist her charms was grim old John Knox, who thundered at the pretty creature as if she was a criminal. Knox knew that Mary would never be loyal to the cause which was his life. She was probably a sincere Catholic. In any case, she was eager to be Queen of England, and it was as the legitimate Catholic claimant that her chances were strongest.

In 1565 she threw off the mask, by marrying the Catholic Lord Darnley, son of the Earl of Lennox. It was a shrewd move. A foreign match would have alarmed the patriotic feeling both of England and of Scotland. This marriage strengthened her party in both countries, for Darnley was in the line of succession to both crowns. Moray fled to England in dismay. But others had been fully won to her side. Unhappily Darnley, though a good-looking youth, was a mean-spirited and weak-minded person, and his high-spirited wife soon learnt to despise him. Tragedy was brewing. Darnley, slighted and humiliated, conceived a jealousy of the queen's clever Italian secretary, Riccio, who was the closest confidant of her political schemes. He listened to a group of grim Scottish nobles of the Protestant party, who blamed Riccio for the policy Mary was pursuing. On 9th March 1566 they burst into Holyrood Palace, and murdered Riccio almost before the queen's eyes. It was a crime such as had often been done in Scotland. But it turned the girl-queen into a tigress; she was ready to sacrifice everything for revenge. She even

excluded her husband from the christening (1566) of their son—the child who was to unite the English and Scottish crowns. Yet she strove to conceal her wrath and scorn. For the best part of a year she fondled and wheedled the fatuous Darnley. When he fell ill she brought him to a lonely house just outside Edinburgh, where on 9th February 1567 she paid him an affectionate visit. A room had been prepared for her, but she did not stay. That night the house was blown up, with barrels of gunpowder which had been placed in the queen's private room; and Darnley's murdered body was found in the garden. The murderer was the wild and daring Earl of Bothwell. He had of course to flee from Edinburgh. To the horror of the world, the reckless and infatuated queen fled after him, and married him three months after the murder. There is no reasonable ground for doubting that she had been a partner in his guilt.

This horrible crime ruined Mary's chances not only of succeeding to the English crown, but of retaining her position in Scotland. With the proud courage which never deserted her, she prepared to fight for her crown, and she could still command the loyalty of many. She was defeated at Carberry Hill (1567), forced to abdicate in favour of her infant son, and imprisoned in the island Castle of Loch Leven. But Mary's spirit could not be broken. A year later she escaped from her prison, raised a new army, and took the field. Again she was defeated, at Langside, near Glasgow (May 1568). She would not submit to a fresh imprisonment; but fled with a few followers, and after a long ride of ninety miles—filled with what thoughts!—crossed the English border, and threw herself on the mercy of her English cousin (May 1568).

It was a shrewd step, based on a profound knowledge of her cousin's character. Elizabeth had too high a sense of 'the divinity that doth hedge a king' to hand her back to the Scottish nobles. She received her as a guest, and for some years Mary moved from house to house in Northern England. Even when the Scottish nobles brought conclusive evidence of Mary's crime, Elizabeth refused to judge her. And indeed there were some advantages in the situation from Elizabeth's point of view. Mary was under surveillance, and could be kept out of mischief. The Scots were now securely Protestant, and could always be kept in order by the threat of restoring their queen, who still had her loyal followers in Scotland. On the other hand, the witch was dangerous; especially as the North

of England was the centre of Catholic feeling. From the moment of her arrival Mary was the centre of plots. One of these was discovered in 1569. Mary was to marry the Duke of Norfolk, first of the English nobles. There was to be a rebellion which was to be aided by Alva from the Netherlands; and Mary was to be placed upon her cousin's throne. Norfolk grew frightened at the last, but the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland did actually rebel without waiting for foreign aid. The rising was easily suppressed. It was followed by a rebellion of the border Lord Dacre in 1570, which was also swiftly suppressed. Even this was not the end of the conspiracies. Just at this moment (1570) the Pope issued the long-threatened excommunication of Elizabeth as a heretic, by which all her Catholic subjects were released from their allegiance. A papal agent, Ridolf, revived, on a more elaborate scale, the plot of 1569, whereby Mary was to marry Norfolk, and a Catholic insurrection was to be aided by an invasion from the Netherlands. Mary herself, Norfolk, the Pope, Philip II. and the Duke of Alva were all parties to the plot. But it was discovered by the astuteness of Cecil, before any overt steps had been taken (1571). Norfolk was sent to the block. Mary was left untouched; but, having shown herself a very dangerous person, she was kept in stricter confinement for the future.

These events closed the first era of the struggle. They cleared the air, and during the next period, which may be said to extend from 1571 to 1584, the issues of the great conflict became more and more clear.

§ 3. *Years of Intensifying Strain. 1571-1584.*

In the first place, the relations between England and Scotland, though still often difficult, were no longer very dangerous. On the whole the Scottish Protestant party steadily maintained the upper hand; and the Kirk, with its General Assembly, representing the whole nation, was able in some degree to balance the power of the nobles. From 1567 to 1578 Scotland was ruled by a succession of regents, on behalf of the boy king, James VI. The first of these, the Earl of Moray—the 'good Lord James'—was the staunchest supporter of the new religion, and next to John Knox had taken the greatest part in winning its triumph: he was devoted to the English alliance. He was unhappily murdered in 1570. But his successors, Lennox, Mar and

Morton, steadily followed a Protestant and English policy, and were able to hold their own against the party favourable to the exiled queen, which was still strong. They disappointed the ministers by their failure to transfer the endowments of the old Church to the new—nearly all the wealth of the old Church being annexed by the nobles. But at least they maintained the Protestant settlement. From 1579 to 1582 the situation again became dangerous, for a Franco-Scot, Esmé Stewart, *Sieur d'Aubigny* and later Earl of Lennox, arrived from France with the object of re-establishing French influence, and obtained for a time a complete ascendancy over the boy king, now thirteen years old. His aim was to revive the cause of the exiled queen, and to restore the Catholic system. But he was staunchly resisted by the Protestant group of nobles and by the General Assembly of the Kirk, led by Andrew Melville. He could not prevent the acceptance of the full Presbyterian system in 1581; and in 1582 a group of Protestant nobles suddenly seized the person of the king, in what is known as the *Ruthven Raid*, and compelled d'Aubigny-Lennox to flee from the country. Henceforward, though King James VI. as he grew older became more and more hostile to the Presbyterian system, he was neither hostile to Protestantism nor to England. He was kept quiet partly by fear of his subjects and partly by the hope of succeeding to the English throne. Thus on the whole during these years the friendship of the sister-nations, though not yet intimate, was maintained; and Elizabeth could generally feel that she had no danger to fear from the side of Scotland.

In England the conspiracies and rebellions of 1569-71 produced a very great effect. They deeply discredited the Catholic party. The fact that the Catholics had actually been anxious to bring Spanish armies into England made them appear unpatriotic. Protestantism became, more clearly than ever, the religion of patriots, and patriotic Catholics began to drift into the national Church in increasing numbers. There were still unending conspiracies. But they were now mainly fomented by secret emissaries from the Continent, and joined only by knots of extremists; and the mere facts that they still continued, and that they were engineered from abroad, made the mass of Englishmen more vehemently anti-Roman. It was becoming every year more clear that England must look forward to a struggle for her national existence, in which the supreme enemy would

be Spain, and in which the cause of national freedom would necessarily be identified with the cause of Protestantism. Hitherto there had been no persecution of Roman Catholics. But in 1571 the law of treason was extended to include such acts as joining, or persuading others to join, the Church of Rome, or obeying a papal bull. This was the natural result of the bull of excommunication of 1570, which commanded loyal Catholics to play the part of traitors to the national government. Now first began a definite persecution of Roman Catholics, but it was limited to those who plotted the overthrow of the government. The mass of quiet Roman Catholics, so long as they did not meddle in politics, were left undisturbed; their only penalty was the payment of fines for non-attendance at church. The dangerous people were the Roman missionaries, who began during these years to venture into England. Some of them came from the seminaries for the training of English priests which were being founded abroad, at Douai and Rome; their first band of missionaries came to England in 1574. Others were English members of the great Order of Jesuits; the first of these to reach England were Campion and Parsons, who came in 1580. It is impossible not to admire the courage shown by these missionaries. Many of them were inspired by the purest religious zeal, and were willing to die as martyrs. But even so, they were politically dangerous, and the government could not safely leave them at large. Some of them were imprisoned, others put to death. But they were sentenced always for treason, not for their religious beliefs. Between 1575, when the executions began, and the end of the reign 187 victims suffered the penalty of death. This is a considerable number, but it is as nothing in comparison with the holocausts of victims who suffered for their religion in the Netherlands, in France and in Spain. In France, for example, over ten thousand Protestants lost their lives in the single butchery of St. Bartholomew's Day, in 1572—just three years before the Elizabethan persecution began. Even as compared with the relatively light persecution of Mary, the persecution of Roman Catholics under Elizabeth was mild. The average number of victims per annum was seven, as compared with eighty for each year of the Marian persecution.

A further feature of these years in England was that, just because the struggle between the two religions was growing more intense, the extreme Protestant party became more active, and thus the Elizabethan compromise was

threatened from both sides at once. From the first the extremists had been dissatisfied with the amount of 'papisty' which, in their view, was allowed to remain in the national Church. At least four 'Puritan' extremists were burnt for heresy, while others were hanged for the treason of denying the royal supremacy. The seeds of Puritanism, and the demand for individual freedom of thought, were actively germinating. And it is significant that in Parliament sympathy with the Puritans was strong and growing. As the crisis of her fate drew nearer, England was becoming more intensely Protestant.

Meanwhile on the Continent the conflict of the religions was becoming more acute. In 1572—the year of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in France—a new revolt broke out in the Netherlands, so formidable that it was never to be crushed. It was begun by the 'Beggars of the Sea,' who had hitherto devoted themselves to preying on Spanish trade, largely using English ports as their bases. Elizabeth had ordered them away from her harbours, apparently as a concession to Spain, but it is probable that she knew what she was doing. They descended upon the Dutch port of Brill, and captured it, and thereupon the northern provinces (now the kingdom of Holland) flared out into rebellion, and placed themselves under the lead of the noble patriot William the Silent.¹ Spain found it impossible to crush them. Within five years the revolt had spread to the southern provinces (modern Belgium), and it appeared as if Philip II was to lose the whole of his northern dominions. Many Englishmen were eager to go to the aid of the Netherlanders. Elizabeth was too cautious to risk, as yet, such an open breach with Spain; but she gave them secret help and encouragement in many indirect ways, and welcomed the intervention of France on their side.

From 1578, however, things began to go wrong with the Netherlands. Alexander of Parma, a very able general in the service of Spain, was gradually reconquering the southern provinces, in which the Roman Catholic faith was still predominant. Protestant Englishmen watched his successes with intense anxiety, and longed to give direct and open aid in a cause which, as they were convinced, was identical with their own. But Elizabeth still held her hand. In 1584 the noble William of Orange, heart and soul of the

¹ There is a life of William the Silent, by Ruth Putnam, in the *Heroes of the Nations Series*.

Dutch resistance, was murdered by a Roman Catholic assassin; and the cause of the Netherlands, and with them of Protestantism, seemed to be in a desperate case. When the resistance of the Dutch was broken, all men believed that England's turn would come.

In France also the struggle was becoming more desperate during these years. Elizabeth was anxious beyond everything to prevent France from joining hands with Spain. Her method, during these years, was no longer that of giving direct help to the French Protestants, but that of holding out the prospect that she would marry a French prince. She was busy flitting with Henry, Duke of Anjou, brother of the French king, in 1570 and 1571. Then came the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572, ordered by the French king and his mother, which sent a shudder of dismay and horror through all the Protestant lands. Yet before long, to the disgust and alarm of many of her subjects, Elizabeth was again busy with French marriage negotiations, this time with the Duke of Alençon, who later succeeded to his brother's title of Duke of Anjou. For ten dreary years the empty flirtation continued; it did not end till 1582. Elizabeth had of course never for a moment meant to marry either of these princes; but she believed, perhaps rightly, that she was helping to prevent a Franco-Spanish combination against England. Meanwhile the French wars of religion were raging at intervals: there were four distinct wars between 1572 and 1584. But in 1584, by the death of the last direct heir to the French throne, the leader of the Huguenots, Henry of Navarre,¹ became the heir-apparent. The prospect of the succession of a Protestant to the French throne aroused the more extreme French Catholics to fury; they formed themselves into a league of resistance, under the lead of the Duke of Guise, Mary Stewart's cousin, and made formal alliance with Philip II. If they should win (and they were the stronger party), the combination of France and Spain, which had been dreaded ever since 1559, would become a reality. Thus in every way the year 1584 represented a crisis in the fortunes of England and of Protestantism.

Moreover Philip II. had by this time made up his slow mind that a direct attack upon England was necessary. He had hoped against hope that the Protestant queen would be overthrown by a Catholic rising, and had been

¹ There is a life of Henry of Navarre, by P. F. Willert, in the *Heroes of the Nations Series*.

always ready to give his assistance; but every plot had failed. His decision was helped by the fact that, since 1570, the English sailors had been making ever more daring raids against the Spanish empire in the New World: the most dazzling achievements of Drake belong to these years, and although Elizabeth was always ready to disavow them, she lent royal ships to these insolent pirates. We shall see something of their achievements in the next chapter, they were dangerously undermining the prestige of Spain, and it was impossible for Philip even to pretend to overlook them any longer.

In all ways, therefore, it had become obvious by 1584 that the crisis was at hand. Goliath had decided that David must be destroyed; and in his slow way he spent the following years in preparing a crushing blow. In the eyes of Europe it seemed inevitable that England must succumb. For to all appearance Spain was at the very height of her power. In Europe Philip dominated Italy; the Emperor was his cousin; the most powerful party in divided France had accepted his protection; his armies, under Parma, the greatest captain of the age, had already subjugated half of the revolting Netherlands, and seemed to be getting the better of the Dutch provinces of the north. his navy had in 1571 won a resounding victory over the Turks at Lepanto. Outside Europe he was master of all the wealth of the New World, which poured a vast annual tribute into his treasury. More than that, he had in 1580 annexed Portugal, and added her immense and rich Eastern empire to his own. He bestrode the world like a Colossus. Who could hope that England could stand against him—England which possessed no trained army at all, and whose only defence lay in the ships of her daring pirate sailors?

§ 4. *The Open Conflict with Spain and the Execution of Mary.*

From 1584 onwards the struggle became more open. In 1585 Elizabeth at last resolved to throw in her lot with the Netherlands. She accepted a protectorate of the Dutch provinces, and agreed to provide five thousand foot and one thousand horse. To command this force she sent her favourite, Leicester—a very unhappy choice. Leicester won no success; he quarrelled with his Dutch allies. His expedition is redeemed only by the memory of Sir Philip Sidney's chivalrous death at Zutphen; and in 1587 Leicester was back home again. But the important thing was that

this intervention was an act of war. The open struggle had begun. In the same year 1585 Philip also had committed an act of war by laying an embargo upon all English ships in Spanish harbours. Elizabeth was not content to retaliate in kind. She sent out Drake with a great fleet to sack and pillage the Spanish cities of the West Indies.

Meanwhile Mary Queen of Scots still pined in prison. Her youth had gone. All the schemes of her friends had failed. Her only hope now rested in Philip of Spain; in 1586 she made a will disinheriting her son, and making Philip her heir. What help should she give in the coming crisis? A Catholic rising on a large scale in England was now impossible. But she still had loyal friends, among them Anthony Babington, a Derbyshire gentleman, who had once been her page. Babington was approached by a priest to join with a group of others in a plot to dispose of Elizabeth 'by poison or steel,' and with her to get rid of her formidable ministers, Burghley, Walsingham and others. And Mary consented to write to Babington with her own hand, urging him 'to be diligent in her service.' Alas! all the letters of the conspirators, and every step they took, came to the knowledge of Secretary Walsingham. He let their plot ripen; then, in August 1586, arrested them all. Fourteen of them were executed; but not until Babington had explained the cipher used in his correspondence with Mary.

Walsingham had long been anxious to be rid of Mary, the centre of unceasing conspiracy; but his mistress had always refused to take the irrevocable step. Mary was now tried before a special commission at her prison of Fotheringay, and found guilty of complicity in the plot. Both Houses of Parliament unanimously petitioned the queen for Mary's execution. She replied begging them to consider whether there were no other means; and Parliament replied that there was none. Was this all a piece of playing to the gallery? Clearly it was not; it arose from Elizabeth's feeling that the seal of sovereignty was indelible, and that no earthly tribunal had the right to try an anointed queen. She signed the warrant, but tried to thrust the onus of executing it on her servants: the Privy Council found it necessary to assume the responsibility itself. On the 8th February 1587, in the hall of Fotheringay Castle, Mary met her death on the scaffold with a dignified courage which almost obliterates the memory of her misdeeds. In the eyes of all good Catholics she died a martyr to the faith;

her death sent a shudder of horror through Europe, for men still owned the sanctity of God's anointed; and the great array of tall ships which Philip II. was already gathering at Cadiz and at Lisbon was looked to as the destined avenger of a great crime. But as the news of the decisive act passed through England, bells rang and bonfires blazed. The die was cast; England must fight for her life, and, trusting in her seamen, she fronted the issue unafraid.

[Pollard's *England from the Death of Henry VIII. to the Death of Elizabeth* is the best modern summary of the period. Froude's *History of England* is a vivid and enchainning narrative, and is less open to challenge on this period than on the reign of Henry VIII. Lord Acton deals with the subject of this chapter in one of his *Lectures on Modern History*, and one of Macaulay's essays deals with *Burghlev*. See also Hay Fleming's *Mary Queen of Scots*. For contemporary European history see Johnson, *Europe in the Sixteenth Century*, Ranke's *History of the Pope*, Froude's *Council of Trent*, Ward's *Counter-Reformation*, Armstrong's *French Wars of Religion*. Motley's *Revolt of the Netherlands* is an admirable narrative of great events.]

CHAPTER VIII

THE ENGLISH SEAMEN, AND THE DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA

§ 1. *The Search for New Trade Outlets.*

WHEN Philip II. at last determined that England must be crushed, the whole world was convinced that the doom of the island State was sealed. For not only was the King of Spain beyond all comparison the most powerful potentate in the world; not only had his troops the reputation of being all but invincible, while England had no regular army at all: even at sea, the main defence of the islands, he seemed to be irresistible. His fleets had in 1571 played a main part in overthrowing the naval power of the Turks at Lepanto. He disposed of all the great ships that were practised by the constant passage of the Atlantic. And to all his other resources he had, in 1580, added the naval strength of Portugal. Even to the most patriotic Englishmen, even to the boldest of English sailors, the odds in favour of Spain seemed to be overwhelmingly great.

Yet we can now see that the project of invading England from the sea with Spanish forces was from the first doomed to failure, unless the English wholly failed to use their advantages. It was doomed to failure because the English had, during the generation preceding the Armada, taught themselves new methods of sea warfare, while the Spaniards had been content to continue in the old ways. What had given this advantage to the English—what had made the sea, at last, their element—was a long series of wild adventures pursued by individual Englishmen.¹ In the sea war, as in other respects, it was the individual enterprise of a freedom-loving people rather than the organised power of the State which saved England and built her greatness. Taught by experience, the seamen had wrought out new devices in the structure, manning, arming and working of ships; and these devices were forced upon them just

¹ A vivid account of these affairs is to be found in Froude's *English Seamen of the Sixteenth Century*.

because they had to depend upon their own resources. Many of the enterprises in which these men were engaged were of a dubious, even of a disreputable, character. But beyond any question they made it possible for England to save herself, and the islands, and perhaps Europe, from the dominance of Spain; they established the maritime supremacy of England; and at the same time they won for the world the Freedom of the Seas. For since that time no power has ventured to claim, as Spain claimed, the right to exclude all other nations from some of the most important seas of the world.

Many of the most interesting enterprises of the period were undertaken purely for the purpose of opening out new lines of trade; for English traders were eagerly looking for openings which would enable them to compete with Spain and Portugal, and especially to get access to the lucrative traffic of the East and the tropical regions, which Spain and Portugal monopolised. Several voyages were made from time to time to the Guinea Coast of West Africa—the earliest by William Hawkins of Plymouth, as early as 1528. But the Portuguese regarded these as illicit invasions of their sphere, and until the English were ready to challenge boldly the papal award of 1493, and to assert by force their rights of trade, there was little chance in this direction. Several ventures were made to Constantinople and the Eastern Mediterranean, the ancient sources of Eastern goods. But trade in the Turkish realms was never easy, and the competition of the Italians was for a long time too strong. At a later date, indeed, trade in this region grew to considerable dimensions. A treaty was made with Turkey in 1580; a Levant Company was started in 1581, and there were English agencies at Constantinople; while in 1583 Ralph Fitch commenced from Aleppo an eight years' journey, which took him to Persia, India and far Siam. But these developments were only made possible by the extraordinary growth of English prestige on the sea, won in other fields.

Soon men began to be fascinated by the idea of finding a back way to the East, either round the north of Asia, or round the north of America—a north-east passage, or a north-west passage. The north-east passage was first attempted. In 1553 Willoughby and Chancellor set out round the North Cape. Willoughby was wrecked, but Chancellor got as far as Archangel, and thence overland to Moscow. From this beginning a trade with Russia was

opened out. In 1558 Anthony Jenkinson made his way by this route down the Volga and across the Caspian to Bokhara—a wonderful journey. But the hope of getting at the East by so toilsome a route was vain; it was soon demonstrated that the north-eastern route could not be profitably pursued beyond Archangel; and though some trade with Russia was developed by a Muscovy Company established for the purpose, men's hopes soon turned in other directions. Even the Russian trade was mainly carried on by way of the Baltic, and here the English traders had to deal with the hostility of the Hanseatic merchants; their ships must always be ready to fight. The attempt to find a north-east passage thus led to very little. But the men and the ships which could face these rough seas were capable of great things.

It was not until a good deal later that serious attempts were made to find a north-west passage—at a time when friction with Spain was very acute, and when Drake had already begun to ravage the West Indies. In 1576-8 Martin Frobisher made three bold voyages into the lands of the Esquimaux; in three voyages during 1585-7 John Davis explored the coasts of Greenland and the Straits that bear his name. The gallantry of these adventures with tiny ships in stormy, ice-bound and uncharted seas was beyond praise.¹ But they only showed that there was no easy passage by this route, and polar exploration for its own sake had little attraction for the Elizabethan. Plainly, if England was to have a share of the traffic of the tropics, it could only be by forcibly breaking down the monopoly of Spain and Portugal, which by 1580 had become the monopoly of Spain alone.

§ 2. *The Pirates of the Narrow Seas.*

Meanwhile the adventurous spirit of English seamen had found an outlet in another sphere. They had taken in large numbers to what can only be described as piracy in the English Channel and the Bay of Biscay, where they preyed upon the stream of shipping that passed especially between Spain and her possessions in the Netherlands. Piracy had always been common in these waters, and indeed in all waters. There was no law and no peace upon the sea, which no power controlled; for the very idea of international law scarcely yet existed, and the pirate's trade

¹ For Elizabethan explorations in the Polar seas, see Atlas, Plate 49 (b)

was regarded as quite respectable. In Edward VI.'s reign, when religious differences began to give a greater force to this irregular war against the great Catholic power, and English gentlemen began to take to piracy, the king's own uncle, Sir Thomas Seymour, Lord High Admiral of England, turned the Scilly Islands into a nest of pirates. But it was in the reign of Mary that piratical adventures began to be widely regarded as patriotic. They afforded the easiest means of protesting against the humiliating subordination of England to Spain, and against the fires of Smithfield. A note of ferocity came into this irregular war, waged by men who could count upon no help or support but their own. The creeks and bays of the south coast, and especially of Devon, lent themselves admirably to these adventures, and many young Devon men of good family, as well as many mere scoundrels, threw themselves with zest into this daring and lawless career. They believed they were fighting for the freedom of England and for the Protestant faith, and avenging the deaths and tortures of many English sailors seized by the Spanish Inquisition. And the rich plunder which they often won did not diminish their ardour.

But it was from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign onwards that this fierce, irregular sea war became most active, because it was now plain how precarious the position of England was and how great the danger of a Spanish attack if ever Philip's hands were free. Spanish ambassadors protested bitterly, but in vain. Elizabeth disavowed all responsibility for the pirates. But she did nothing to check them. She was not sorry that Spain should learn that the English could fight, and that these waters were dangerous.

Nor were the English alone engaged in these adventures. Alva's persecution in the Netherlands drove patriotic Dutchmen to take to sea warfare, and the 'Beggars of the Sea,' as they called themselves, had their position partly regularised, according to the ideas of the time, by 'letters of marque,' which William of Orange issued. Until 1572 they freely used English harbours as their bases, and devoted themselves to cutting off the supplies sent from Spain to crush their compatriots. Huguenot sailors from France also joined in the grim game, carrying 'letters of marque' from the Prince of Condé. Their principal base was La Rochelle, but they often used English harbours. English, French and Dutch united in a tacit partnership against

the common enemy, and combined to make the passage of the Channel exceedingly unsafe, especially for Spanish ships. As early as 1562 we are told that there were four hundred English and French raiders in the Channel, and that they had taken seven hundred prizes. Elizabeth rejoiced that it should be so, and gave underhand help though she dared not give open recognition. In 1568—when the plot of the northern earls to enthronc Mary of Scots with Spanish help was maturing—the Huguenot rovers chased into Southampton a Spanish fleet, laden with treasure borrowed from Genoese bankers and destined for the Netherlands—possibly also for an army of invasion for England. Elizabeth calmly took possession of the treasure 'for greater safety,' and later arranged to borrow the money for her own purposes from the Genoese.

In effect the pirates of the Channel were engaged in a private and irregular war against an overwhelming power which their country dared not yet defy. Their highly improper proceedings—which were sometimes defiled by gross cruelty—undoubtedly hampered the King of Spain, helped to prevent him from crushing the revolt of the Netherlands, and delayed his inevitable onslaught on England till she was ready to resist. But above all they trained a breed of very daring and efficient sailors, who had learnt to despise their Spanish foes, and to encounter the most desperate adventures unafraid.

From these illicit and irregular enterprises sprang new methods of sea warfare, which were to prove their efficacy in the South Seas and in the Armada fights. The Spaniards still clung to the old ideas. Their notion of sea warfare was that it ought to be as like land warfare as possible; they filled their ships with soldiers armed as for the field, and often sea-sick in rough weather, and they gave to their sailors, whom they regarded as inferiors merely the duty of bringing their ships alongside the enemy in order that the soldiers might board, and fight with pike and musket and sword. Their ships were great clumsy structures, not easily worked. For fighting their experience in the calmer waters of the south had taught them to trust largely to galleys and galleasses, partly worked by slaves at the oar. Because their notion of fighting demanded close quarters they paid little attention to gunnery, and frequently carried only a few guns, high up at the bow and at the stern. These guns could make a noise, but because of their height they felt the full motion of the ship, which disturbed their

aim; and they could not fire a broadside volley. The pirates had to invent quite other methods. They needed swift and light vessels, which could sail close to the wind, manœuvre easily, and get away from superior strength; and they developed methods of rigging their ships which, though mainly suitable for small vessels, enabled them easily to outmanœuvre the Spanish floating castles. The crews of their small vessels had to be ready to fight as well as to work the ship, and their methods of fighting were not those of the land. And since their aim was always to avoid close quarters they paid great attention to gunnery. Small as they were, they commonly carried more and heavier guns than the Spaniards; they could fire a broadside; and as their guns were fired from near the water, they could inflict great damage upon the towering Spanish ships. The pirate ships had to be small, partly because private adventurers could not afford big ships, but mainly because the easily worked fore-and-aft rigging was only suitable for small vessels. But though many of them must have seemed like mosquitoes in comparison with the proud galleons of Spain, they moved so nimbly that there was no dealing with them. These new methods of sea warfare, gradually developed during the age of piracy, ultimately ensured the defeat of the Armada. In the meanwhile they made possible the daring and intoxicating adventures of the Spanish Main, for which they were a preparation.

§ 3. *Drake and the Adventures of the Spanish Main.*

The failure of attempts to find back ways to the East, or lines of trade which could compensate for exclusion from the tropics, had made it plain that it was only by a direct challenge to the Spanish and Portuguese monopoly, supported if need be by force, that English enterprise could be given a new start. Now that England was Protestant, there was no longer a religious motive for respecting the papal award of 1493, under which this monopoly was maintained. The English government dared not yet issue an open challenge. But English sailors were very ready to give it on their own account; and, under the rose, Elizabeth was very ready that they should do so. She was even willing to lend them royal ships for these adventures, provided that there was no open war against Spain, and that she got her full share of the profit. In this challenge two stages may be recognised. The first was the stage of

honest trade, based on a denial of Spain's right to prevent it, and backed by the employment of force when the right of access was refused. This naturally and inevitably led to a second stage of downright, if irregular, war, when the Spaniard declined to abandon his policy of exclusion. Though many men took part in these enterprises, and achieved romantic deeds, these two stages are pre-eminently summed up and represented by the work of two cousins, both Devon men—John Hawkins and Francis Drake;¹ of whom the latter was to find, in this sphere, the chance of proving himself a veritable hero of romance, the supreme representative of the gallantry and daring of the Elizabethan sea-dogs.

Hawkins was the son of the William Hawkins who had ventured to Guinea in 1528, and it was to the trade between Guinea and Spanish America that his mind naturally turned. The staple of this trade was negro slaves, who were imported to America to take the place of the rapidly decreasing natives. Nobody of that age dreamed of objecting to this horrible traffic on its own account. It had been recommended on humanitarian grounds by a very honest Spanish ecclesiastic, the apostle of Spanish America, Las Casas. But neither Spain nor Portugal wanted to see outsiders meddling in it. On the other hand, the Spanish colonists wanted more negroes than they could get, and were willing to pay high prices for them; and Hawkins denied the right of Portugal to prevent him from getting negroes, or of Spain to forbid him to sell them. In 1562 and 1564 he made highly successful and profitable voyages, in the second of which Queen Elizabeth was a partner. He did not hesitate to use force when Spanish officials tried to prevent him from carrying on his trade: sometimes a show of force was alone needed, for the Spaniards were eager to buy. But the ease with which he overcame serious opposition when it was offered showed that, with sufficient daring, the Spanish empire could be readily assaulted. Hawkins prided himself upon always doing an honest deal when he came to trade: he used violence only to open his markets. In 1567-8 he undertook his third and biggest venture. This time the queen lent him two ships; and Francis Drake went with him in command of one of his smaller vessels. After a prosperous voyage he was compelled to put into San Juan de Ullua, on the Mexican coast, for repairs. The

¹ There is a brilliant short life of Drake, by Sir Julian Corbett, in the English Men of Action Series.

Spanish treasure fleet was there, but Hawkins did not touch it, true to his rôle of peaceful trader. A Spanish war fleet came to the harbour: Hawkins could certainly have barred its passage, but he preferred to bargain that he should be allowed to finish his repairs and go home. Suddenly the Spanish admiral, breaking his pledge, attacked the unprepared English in the confined waters of the harbour, where they could not use their customary manœuvres. One of the queen's ships, and nearly all the profits of the voyage, had to be abandoned; and Hawkins and Drake reached England with only two small vessels in a battered condition.

This was the end of the attempt at peaceful trading in Spanish America: the sort of end that was bound to come. The news was received with fury in England. It gave to Elizabeth one of her pretexts for seizing the Spanish treasure-ships in Southampton. But, above all, it made Francis Drake resolve to wage war on his own account, without disguise and without hesitation, against the Spanish dominion in America. And this thickset young man with the steel-blue eyes proved himself a terrible foe. He had plied the seas since his boyhood. He had traded to the Netherlands, and conceived a hatred of Spain's methods there; to Spain itself, and seen English victims of the Inquisition. Now and henceforward he had no other aim in life but war with Spain; and war with Spain he waged unrelentingly, till the day when, in 1596, he was buried off Porto Bello, in the seas where his name had for so long been a terror. *El Draque* means in Spanish 'the Dragon'; and a dragon indeed he was for more than twenty years to Spain. For generations after his death Spanish children were frightened to sleep by threats of *El Draque*.

We cannot here tell all the story of his incredible deeds. No enterprise was too daring for him: he would attack a fortress with a handful of tarry sailors, or cut out a great ship twice the size of his own from under the very guns of forts, or venture in a mere cockleshell of a ship into seas unknown and full of enemies. Yet there was always method in his madness, and a sort of wild humorous ingenuity in the devices he adopted. One rule he made for himself, which distinguished him from most of his fierce contemporaries. He never took the lives of non-combatants.

Of his many voyages and adventures three alone can be recorded. In 1572 (after two previous voyages about which we know very little) he set out with two ships, one of

seventy tons, the other of twenty-five, and a crew of seventy-three all told, to attack the Spanish American empire at its heart. For a moment he captured and seized the town of Nombre de Dios,¹ where the Spanish treasures coming across the Isthmus of Panama were shipped for Europe, but had to retire before he could seize the stacks of silver bars which he found there. He attacked the fortified port of Cartagena, and carried out in triumph to the sea a big ship which was loading at the quay. He landed on the isthmus, all unknown, and, with the aid of some wild half-breeds with whom he made friends, stopped the great train of mules carrying the annual produce of the Peruvian mines across to Nombre de Dios, and loaded the best of it on his ship. He stopped and searched over two hundred vessels in the Caribbean Sea, relieving them of their treasure, and all the time never hurt a woman or an unarmed man. Then homewards, loaded to the scuppers with his spoil. As he passed Cartagena he saw all the great treasure-ships crowded together for safety. With characteristic bravado he stood close in, and ran past them with the flag of St. George at the masthead and all his pennons streaming. He reached England again in August 1573.

During this voyage he had seen, from the isthmus, the waters of the Pacific, hitherto the sole preserve of Spain. To dare these inviolate waters was the next project of his glorious insolence; though the only known approach was through the dangerous Straits of Magellan, past which he must count on no help, and no place of refuge. After a spell of service in Irish waters, he managed to form a company to supply him with a little fleet; and plenty of volunteers of spirit were eager to join him. In the background was the queen, whom he had secretly interviewed: Philip II. was threatening, and she was glad to find a means of annoying him. In December 1577 Drake sailed from Plymouth with the *Pelican* of 100 tons, the *Elizabeth* of 80 tons, the *Marygold* of 30 tons, all well gunned, together with the provision ship *Swan* of 50 tons, and a pinnace called the *Christopher*.

Even with this force it was a bold endeavour to force a way into the Pacific. But the squadron was soon to be reduced to very modest dimensions. The *Swan* was broken up for firewood and the *Christopher* abandoned before he had reached the straits. Then, after that tortuous and dangerous passage had been safely negotiated, a violent

¹ See the map, Atlas, Plate 53.

storm scattered the remaining ships. The *Marygold* foundered. The *Elizabeth's* captain gave up heart and sailed home again. Drake was left alone with the *Pelican*, now rechristened the *Golden Hind*, a vessel of 100 tons, alone on the far side of the world. Who could have blamed him if he had abandoned his enterprise? Instead he sailed boldly up the coast of Chile; seized Valparaíso and revictualled there, capturing a useful pilot; landed at one point after another to capture trains of treasure; entered the very harbour of Callao, where the Peruvian treasure was shipped for the isthmus, and, finding that a rich load had just been sent off, pursued and captured the ship that carried it, and took from it thirteen chests of pieces of eight, 80 lbs. weight of gold, and untold jewels: the silver previously captured had to be used as ballast. With such a burthen it was worth going home. But the Spaniards would be waiting on the route by which he had come. He resolved to return by the north-west passage, and settle that problem once for all. But he sailed north and north till he reached the latitude of Vancouver, without discovering any passage; and, giving up this plan, he landed in California, near San Francisco (he called the land New Albion) to make ready for a voyage homeward by the Cape of Good Hope. It was a tremendous venture, only less marvellous than Magellan's earlier circumnavigation. But it was successfully accomplished, though with much weariness and peril. The *Golden Hind*, with its priceless cargo, laboured into Plymouth in the autumn of 1580. The secrets of the great Spanish empire were England's; the innermost penetralia of her power had been invaded and explored, and she had been able to do nothing to protect them. In Drake's absence the party which favoured peace with Spain had been his enemies; his troubles with some of his gentlemen volunteers, which we have not been able to touch upon, had been fomented by their agents in his ships. But the treasure which he sent in loaded caravans to London, and the exultation which his amazing exploits aroused in all Englishmen, overcame all that. Elizabeth herself went down to the *Golden Hind*, and knighted the 'master thief of the unknown world.'

So good a sword as that of Drake could not be left to rust. In 1585 when the long simmering conflict between Spain and England broke into open war, when Philip was beginning to plan his Armada, when the English troops were being sent to the aid of the revolting Netherlanders,

Drake was called upon to go once more to the West Indies, this time no longer to wage private war, but with a royal commission, and in command of a national enterprise. He was given a fleet of two ships of the line and eighteen cruisers, with attendant vessels, and a force of 2300 soldiers and sailors. With these he sailed first to Vigo in Spain itself, as if to give contemptuous warning of his intentions, then to the Cape Verde Islands, whose chief town, Santiago, was sacked and burnt, and then straight for the West Indies. No plundering raid was this, but an act of war. The strong walled city of San Domingo, the capital of the Spanish American dominions, and the rich town of Cartagena, capital of the 'Spanish Main,' were in turn stormed, plundered, and held to ransom, while all the ships which had crowded for refuge to their harbours were burnt. Sickness among his crews prevented Drake from crowning the enterprise by the capture of Panama. But on his way home he destroyed a Spanish settlement on the coast of Florida, relieved Raleigh's exhausted colony of Virginia, and only missed the annual treasure fleet by twelve hours. Not by accident, but in the most open way, and as it were after due notice, the strongholds of the Spanish empire had been destroyed, and the weakness of the colossus revealed. The blow to Philip's prestige was immense. The limitless possibilities of the new naval warfare were revealed. One is tempted to wonder why men did not see that the Great Armada was already defeated in advance.

Drake does not stand alone among the sea-dogs of Elizabeth, though he stands supreme. But the thrilling exploits of his fellows cannot be narrated here, even in the baldest way. Their record, a record worthy of them, is to be found in Hakluyt's *Voyages*, that epic of English sailormen.¹ But one aspect of their work, not yet touched upon, deserves to be noted. Some of them were bent not only upon commerce, or upon hampering Spain, but upon founding new Englands in the vast lands across the Atlantic. Here, said Sir Humphrey Gilbert, in a book published in 1576, should be found a home for needy Englishmen, and in 1578 he obtained a charter 'to inhabit and possess at his choice all remote and heathen lands not in the actual possession of any Christian prince.' In 1583 Gilbert set

¹ An excellent selection from Hakluyt is published by the Clarendon Press, edited by F. J. Payne under the title *Voyages of Elizabethan Seamen*. There is another selection by C. R. Beazley, Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* captures something of the spirit of the time.

forth with five ships to plant a colony in Newfoundland, which the English had claimed since Cabot's discovery in 1497. He started a settlement at St John's, the first English colony, but he was drowned in a storm on his return, and could not nurture his infant settlement into strength. Gilbert's half-brother was Sir Walter Raleigh, who took up his projects. In 1584 he sent an expedition to find a suitable site for a colony north of Florida, and next year Sir Richard Grenville was sent with seven ships to plant a settlement at Roanoke, in the smiling land which was christened Virginia, in honour of the virgin queen. But the colony got into difficulties, and the colonists had to be brought home by Drake (1586). In 1587 Raleigh sent out 150 settlers to renew the experiment, but by 1590 they were all scattered. These were the first English attempts at colonisation, the first dribblets of that vast stream of migrants who have flowed from the islands in so many directions. Colonisation was not the *forte* of the Elizabethans; the men who achieved such marvels in adventure and in war were not the men to face the duller labours of settlement. Their task was to break down the barriers and prepare the way, to throw open the pathways of the seas for the coming and going of the islanders and of all the world.

§ 4 *The Spanish Armada*

Before that task was finished the final challenge of Spain had to be met, and for that Philip was now laboriously preparing. His best sea-captain, the Marquis of Santa Cruz, was working out the plan of the great operation while Drake was sacking the Spanish cities in the West. He proposed to concentrate in the Channel the whole naval might of Spain, and to disembark from a fleet of over 500 sail an army of over 50,000 with a hundred guns. Though the plans were later changed, the size of the fleet was much reduced, and the task of organising the invasion was transferred to the Duke of Parma, in the main the conception of the great expedition remained, a fleet big enough to crush all opposition was to hold the Channel, and transport to England an army beyond the power of English forces to resist. Preparations began at once. The expedition was fixed for the summer of 1587, vast stores were already being accumulated, and ships were under orders to rendezvous at Lisbon and Cadiz from all quarters.

All through the spring of 1587 the ships were gathering and the dockyard men were busy in the harbours of Cadiz and Lisbon. But they were not allowed to finish their task in peace. On 29th April a squadron of six-and-twenty English ships appeared off Cadiz harbour, and the admiral in command was the terrible *Draque*. The harbour was full of transports and storeships, and there were ten galleys too, and galleys were held to be irresistible in confined and calm waters. But Drake, boldly sailing into the harbour, turned the galleys into mere sinking shambles by well-directed volleys, and then proceeded to plunder and burn all the other vessels, including eighteen half-fitted great-ships. That done he withdrew, having very effectually, in his own characteristic phrase, 'singed the King of Spain's beard'. In the open seas he captured and destroyed some twenty-four vessels, many of them bringing supplies for the Armada. He hung about off the Portuguese coast till June, but no squadron of the main Armada in Lisbon was ready to come out for him. Before he returned to England he captured the great East Indiaman, *San Felipe*, the biggest ship afloat, with a cargo of gold and gems, silk and spices worth something like a million of our money—the richest prize ever yet seen in England. Well might the Spaniards dread *El Draque*, and the English feel confident in the coming fight which this daring raid postponed for a whole year.

Ere the great fleet was ready again it had lost its able and brave captain, Santa Cruz, and as if the fates were luring him to his ruin Philip II insisted upon filling his place with a man wholly ignorant of the sea, and lacking in all gifts of leadership—the Duke of Medina Sidonia, whose only claim was that he was one of the greatest of Spanish nobles. Incapable of vigour, Medina Sidonia delayed the sailing of the great fleet from February to May, 1588, even when it sailed, it was scattered by a storm, and forced to refit in Spanish harbours, and it was the 19th of July before it sighted English land.

It was a very great and splendid fleet which came crowding up the Channel, a fleet of 130 vessels, of which 77 were fighting galleons, seven of them being over 1000 tons, and the average over 550 tons, there were also four great galleasses and four galleys propelled in part by oars, and 45 storeships and lesser craft. They carried among them 2400 guns, 19,000 soldiers, and 8000 sailors. The ships looked larger than their tonnage, for the Spaniards

built their ships high out of the water, making real 'castles' of the forecastle and the poop. But they were but slightly provided with ammunition, since they counted on engaging their enemy at close quarters; and most of their burthen of men, being soldiers, were of no use unless they could be employed in this kind of fighting. In the Netherlands were waiting 30,000 veterans under the Duke of Parma, the greatest captain of the age; and the business of the great Armada was simply to hold the narrow seas till these should be ferried over—a great flotilla of small boats being ready to transport them.

Meanwhile, during the spring, England, in a fever of alarm, was making preparations. Trained bands of the militia and volunteer levies were being drilled: but they could have done nothing against Parma's veterans, once these were landed. The safety of England depended wholly upon her ships. The queen's navy counted 34 vessels, three or four of them of as great tonnage as the biggest of the Spaniards, though less loftily built. Some of them bore names which tradition has continued in each age of the navy: the *Victory*, the *Dreadnought*, the *Vanguard*, the *Revenge*, the *Triumph*, the *Swiftsure*. These were the backbone of the fleet; but they were supported by a large number of merchant-ships, and craft of the type that had done pirate work in the Channel and in the West Indies. The whole fleet numbered 197 vessels. But the majority of them were tiny craft, many of them of little or no fighting value. Even the queen's ships averaged under 400 tons, and the rest averaged something like 125 tons. Their crews numbered 15,000 men against the 27,000 Spaniards, but the proportion of trained sailors was very much higher. Moreover the English ships were in proportion far more heavily gunned, and knew far better how to use their guns; also they carried greater stores of ammunition, though not nearly enough.

In the eyes of the world the superiority lay wholly upon the Spanish side; but the real superiority for naval fighting was on the English side, especially after the hard training of the last generation. The defeat of the Armada was no miracle; it was the natural result of what had gone before. 'The Englishmen,' shrewdly noted the Venetian ambassador at Madrid, 'are of a different quality from the Spaniards, bearing a name above all the West for being expert and enterprising in all maritime matters, and the finest fighters upon the sea.' The supreme command of

the English fleet had been given to Lord Howard of Effingham, a cousin of the queen. But though a man of family, chosen for that reason, Howard, unlike Medina Sidonia, knew something of the sea, and was not afraid to take responsibilities. And he had the help of the most daring and practised seamen of the age. Drake was second in command, and with him at the admiral's council sat Hawkins and Frobisher.

The bulk of the English fleet had gathered at Plymouth by May, some forty ships being left in the Straits of Dover to watch the Flanders coast. Drake was eager to sail for Spain and attack the Spaniards in their own waters, and Howard supported him. There can be no doubt that this was the right course. But the misgivings of the government, and still more the shortness of supplies (which were provided only for a month at a time), rendered this difficult. They did indeed make a dash for Corunna on July 8, if they had been a few days earlier they would have caught the Spanish fleet refitting in the harbours of the north Spanish coast. But the wind changed, and they had to run back to Plymouth. Here they lay, penned into harbour by the southerly wind which had brought the Spaniards across the Bay of Biscay, when the Armada suddenly appeared off Plymouth on July 19. It had the English at a disadvantage, but its commander did not know how to use the chance as Drake would have used it. The English fleet was left undisturbed, while it warped out of harbour during the night, tacked against the wind, and came up on the weather side of the enemy. Now began (July 20) a long running fight up the Channel, which lasted through a whole week, until on the 26th the Armada anchored off Calais. The English dared not close with the enemy since that would give the Spaniards the chance they wanted. They could only harass them, 'pluck their feathers,' rattle their nerves. A good deal of damage was done, but no vital injury had been inflicted, and the enemy had reached his destination, the straits of Dover, and would soon be in communication with Parma.

Now came the critical fighting in the actual straits. The English fleet was now at full strength having been joined by the Dover contingent. On the night of the 28th the English sent eight fireships drifting with wind and tide into the midst of the Spanish fleet. The Spaniards had to slip their cables, and move off in disorder. Then came, off Gravelines, the one great general action of the campaign.

The Spaniards (by their own bad seamanship) fought at a disadvantage; their fleet was in disarray; the wind threatened to blow them upon the sandbanks. For eight hours there was hard, pell-mell fighting; and the expenditure of shot and shell on the English side so far passed all experience that ammunition was running short before the end of the fight. The Armada was far from being destroyed in this hard fight. But four ships were sunk, and others taken or driven ashore useless. And in the end the pressure of the English from the windward side compelled Medina Sidonia, as the only way of escaping the shoals, to break away to the north. The English feared his return, and pursued him far up the North Sea. But return was out of the question. The great ships were badly cut about, many of them leaking. Their supplies of ammunition were nearly exhausted, for they had never anticipated fighting of this sort. And to crown all, violent gales sprung up, before which they could do nothing but run, in disorder the only possibility was to flee back to Spain north about round Scotland and Ireland.

Legend has attributed the defeat of the Armada to the intervention of Heaven: '*Flavit Deus et dissipati sunt.*' But the great Armada was already defeated before the gales arose. It was defeated by the superior seamanship and gunnery which the English had learnt in a generation of adventure, and which prevented the Spaniards from ever getting to close quarters, or making use of the 19,000 soldiers and the multitude of small guns which they had prepared for that sort of battle. The stormy waters of the North Sea and the Atlantic completed the ruin. Nineteen ships were wrecked off the coasts of Scotland and Ireland; thirty-five more disappeared unaccounted for, some of them wrecked in a storm in the Bay, almost within sight of home. It was only a battered fragment of the great fleet that returned to Spain. On the English side not a ship was lost; and such loss of life as there was was mainly due to sickness.

The tragic ruin of the Armada, and above all the shameful futility of its achievements, meant the downfall of Spanish prestige on the sea. The colossus that bestrode the world had fallen in fragments. No longer could Spain maintain a monopoly which she was manifestly unable to defend. All the roads of the sea lay open to the adventurous: not only to the English, but to the peoples of all nations; the unpeopled regions of the New World were free for them

to settle, the rich trade of the tropics and the golden East awaited their exploitation.

But neither England nor the world yet saw how great were the results of the victory. England still feared invasion from the Netherlands, still kept her tired bands drilling. Philip II himself had not given up hope, but laboured to recreate his broken naval power, and the war dragged on during the whole remainder of Elizabeth's reign, and indeed, in form until 1604. Drake was for pushing home the victory by a bold attempt to conquer Spanish America, for which he proposed to raise a huge force in conjunction with the Dutch. But these counsels were too bold for the government, which limited its efforts to a variety of raiding enterprises after the old pattern and to a rather ineffective expedition in 1589 whose aim was to stimulate revolt in Portugal. Even the Spanish ports were long left at peace so that Philip was able to build a new fighting navy. and when Howard in 1591 led an expedition against the Azores he had to retreat before a superior force. This was the occasion on which the 'magnificent barbarian' Sir Richard Grenville flatly declined to retreat and in the *Revenge* fought fifteen Spanish men-of-war for fifteen hours refusing to surrender.¹ The *Revenge* was the only English warship taken by the enemy in Elizabeth's reign, but the glorious spirit of its resistance was worth a thousand ships.

Many glorious deeds of war were done during the years which followed the Armada fight, but they did not seriously affect the issue. In 1595 Drake got his way, and he and Hawkins led a considerable expedition against the West Indies. But it led to no important results save the sacking of a few towns, and only deserves to be remembered because the two old sea-dogs both died of sickness during its course, and were buried in the waters which had rung with their names for so many years. That may be regarded as the close of the wonderful period of patriotic piracy. The kind of foray which had been so valuable in the days when Spain overshadowed the world was now out of date. The time had come for new and more prosaic methods—methods of construction not of destruction. The work of the sea-dogs was done.

Though the war lingered on in name, its last great operation was the attack upon Cadiz, led by the Earl of Essex in 1596. It was not well managed. But in spite of that

¹ This is the episode described in Tennyson's ballad of *The Revenge*.

the city was seized and burnt, together with most of the shipping in its harbour; and this ignominious handling of the greatest Spanish port, to which the argosies of the Indies had annually brought their treasures, showed that the Spanish dominion of the world was a vanished nightmare. Before his death in 1598 Philip II. admitted, in instructions to his son, that sooner or later the English must be admitted to the traffic of the New World, for which they had fought so hard. The Freedom of the Seas was won; it remained for the next generation to use it.

[Corbett's *Drake and the Tudor Navy*; Froude's *English Seamen of the Sixteenth Century*; Hale's *Story of the Great Armada*; Stebbing's *Life of Raleigh*; Payne's or Beazley's selections from Elizabethan voyages.]

CHAPTER IX

THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND

§ 1. *The Problem of Ireland*

THE sixteenth century was for England a period of glorious achievement, and for Scotland a period of national rebirth, but for Ireland it was a period of tragic miseries. The islands were in this age brought nearer to the unity which was to enable them to face a new era with confidence; but while the union of England and Wales was brought about peacefully and by constitutional means, and while between England and Scotland ancient enmity was replaced by friendship, leading towards union, the union of Ireland with England was achieved by a cruel process of conquest. This was due, as we shall see, to the influence of the embitterment produced by the Reformation and the struggle with Spain. But it left behind it a rancour and a sense of injustice which have contributed to poison the relations of the two countries ever since, and to make Ireland, in all succeeding times, the worst bewilderment and the most shameful failure with which British statesmanship has had to deal.

We have seen¹ that, unhappily for Ireland, the Norman conquest of the island was never completed and that during the later Middle Ages the authority of the English king almost wholly broke down, so that only an *enclave* round Dublin, known as the Pale, observed English law, and this region alone was represented in the Irish Parliament. We have also seen that Henry VII. and (during the early part of his reign) Henry VIII. had contented themselves with trying to maintain their authority within the Pale, and to prevent it from falling under the control of the powerful Earls of Kildare, whose lands lay just outside.²

Even within the Pale there was much misery, because law and order were ill maintained, like the districts of Scotland which lay on the borders of the wild Highlands, the Pale was subject to frequent raids from the clans out-

¹ See above, pp. 56, 122, 188.

² For all that follows, see the map, Atlas, Plate 42 (a).

side, and many landowners found it necessary to pay 'black rents' to various chieftains, as an insurance against being raided. Outside the Pale there was no law or order at all, except what individual chieftains were able to enforce within the limits of their clans. For the greater part of Ireland was in much the same condition as the Highlands of Scotland in the same period—it was divided into clans which in practice recognised no authority save that of their own chiefs, acknowledged no law save their tribal customs, and were unceasingly engaged in war with one another, often of the most bloody and treacherous kind. But there was this difference between Ireland and the Scottish Highlands, that while the Highland chieftains were in a real degree subject to the King of Scotland, and took part in Scotland's national life the Irish clans in the early sixteenth century, though they nominally recognised the suzerainty of the English king as Lord of Ireland, were in reality quite unaffected by it. Some even among the great Norman barons, such as the Burkes (de Burghs) in Galway, had in practice assimilated themselves to their surroundings during the long centuries of anarchy, and though originally conquering rulers, were now to all intents and purposes tribal chiefs. This wild tribal Ireland carried on some trade with the Continent as well as with England. But its contact with the outer world was very slight. It was, in fact, in an earlier stage of civilisation than the rest of Western Europe. Moreover the Church whose noble work had been the glory of early Ireland had fallen into terrible disorganisation. From all quarters this tale is told—not only Englishmen, whose testimony might be suspected, but Spaniards wrecked from the Armada or sent to take part in invasions and Jesuit missionaries despatched to rouse the Irish against heresy, unite in saying that churches had fallen into ruin, that cathedrals were turned into fortresses, that bishops and abbots were as turbulent as the tribal chiefs.

Among these warring tribes there was little or no sense of national feeling, no loyalty wider than that of the clan. In old days, before the Norman invasions, there had been kings of all Ireland, and though they were ill obeyed, they might in time have brought order. But the Norman invasions had swept them away, and replaced them by the nominal authority of the English Crown. If Ireland was to enjoy peace and the chance of growth in civilisation, it could only be by the repression of tribal anarchy, only so could

Ireland in any real sense become a nation. And the only power which could possibly undertake this task, as things were, was the English Crown. But if it was to be successful, it would have to undertake the task sympathetically, it would have to respect Irish laws and usages in so far as they were not harmful, it would have to rule Ireland in Ireland's interests, not in its own. The Tudor sovereigns undertook the task of taming the anarchy and reorganising the country. Unhappily the circumstances under which they undertook the task, and the motives by which they were almost necessarily influenced, were such as to forbid the observance of these conditions.

In the eyes of the English, who enjoyed settled order and a fair degree of prosperity, the native Irish seemed to be in a state of mere barbarism, not very different from that of the Red Indians. The English saw in Ireland a country given over to miserable and unceasing feuds, murders and treacheries, a country of forests and wastes and marshes, broken only by patches of the rudest cultivation, a country whose lower classes went about like savages, half naked, and were scarcely able to provide themselves with roofs to cover their heads, and indeed the constant anarchy had reduced large parts of Ireland to a condition that seemed to justify this picture. Englishmen did not realise that, in spite of the misery of large parts of it, Ireland was a land which had produced saints and poets and scholars, and was still producing them, and that once they had escaped from the anarchy which caused their wretchedness, the Irish people were as capable as any other people in Europe of enjoying and enriching a fully civilised life. To most Englishmen who had dealings with this unhappy country, it appeared that there was nothing in the life and customs of the native Irish that was worth preserving, the only hope seemed to be that the Irish should be civilised by force after the English pattern, and when they found that this process was resented and resisted, and that Irish customs still persisted, many Englishmen gradually drifted into the abominable view that the Irish were irreclaimable savages, who must be wiped out like the savages of the New World, and replaced by Englishmen. They came the more readily to this horrible opinion because in actual fact Ireland constituted a terrible danger to England during the crisis of the struggle with Spain.

Of all the Irish customs those which the English least understood were the clan system, and the system of land-

tenure upon which it rested, for these systems were wholly ~~unlike~~ anything that England had known since long before the Norman Conquest. According to Irish usage the lands of the clan were the property of the clan; the chief (who was in a vague way elected, though always from the same family) was only the chief guardian of the clan's rights, and had only a life-interest in the clan's lands. He was thus quite unlike a great feudal landowner with his vassals and tenantry; though the English insisted upon treating him as such. So far as they understood the Irish system the English thought it a thoroughly bad one, which could never lead to a settled and systematic development of the resources of the land; and they held that the first step towards better things must be to do away with the clan system, and to turn the chiefs into landowners after the English pattern. They were right in seeing the dangerous features of the clan system on its political side, and in wishing to bring all the clans under the reign of law. But to uproot a people's ideas as to its rights in the soil was another matter. In a purely agricultural and pastoral country such as Ireland, land rights are all-important; and it is on the question of the land, in one form or another, that all the long bitterness has mainly turned, from Henry VIII's time to our own.

§ 2. *The First Attempts to Solve the Irish Problem.*

It was Henry VIII.'s breach with Rome which first made the king turn his attention seriously to the necessity of bringing Ireland into an orderly state. For he found that Charles V. was tempted to stir up trouble among the Irish chiefs, and that the Pope, who claimed that Ireland belonged to the papal see, and had been conferred on Henry II. by papal bull, was inclined to use these claims against a heretic king. But there was, at this date, little or no papal enthusiasm in Ireland. Henry's repudiation of the papal authority was quite calmly accepted by most of the chieftains. Some Jesuits, whom the Pope despatched in 1541 to stir up religious feeling in Ireland, had to return disconsolate, with nothing achieved.

In answer to the papal claim, Henry in 1541 assumed the title of King of Ireland, under an Act of the Irish Parliament—the earlier title had been only Lord of Ireland. Before that date the powerful Fitzgeralds of Kildare, who had long dominated the Pale, had broken into rebellion:

Henry crushed the rising with vigour, and executed the Earl of Kildare and his five uncles. This branch of the Fitzgeralds henceforward gave little trouble. Henry then sent across a commission of inquiry under Sir Anthony St. Leger, to work out a scheme for the better government of Ireland. The scheme was not without elements of statesmanship. The chieftains of the clans nearest to the Pale were to be given grants of their (or their clans') lands on English tenure, subject to the condition that they should do their best to make their tenants (or clansmen) speak English, that they should give up levying blackmail and maintaining armed bands of retainers, and that they should recognise and use the English courts. On this basis a large part of Leinster was reorganised, and brought under the same system of government as the Pale. As for the more distant and powerful chiefs, like the heads of the great O'Neill and O'Donnell clans in Ulster, or of the O'Briens in Clare, they could not be so directly dealt with. But they were persuaded when possible to hold their lands from the Crown, and to attend Parliament. Some of them were willing to fall in with these proposals, notably Con O'Neill of Tyrone; and on him and some other great chiefs Henry conferred earldoms. Moreover the plunder of the Irish monasteries was largely distributed among the chiefs, who made little difficulty about accepting it, or about recognising Henry as head of the Church. The clan system was being weakened. So far as it went, the work of Henry VIII. was successful, and the authority of the Crown in Ireland stood higher than it had ever done before.

But the habits of tribal independence and of turbulence were not to be so easily exorcised; nor could the land rights of the clansmen, and their claim to choose their chiefs, be calmly disregarded without serious trouble. Early in the reign of Edward VI. there was a sudden rising of the O'Conors and the O'Mores, who occupied an area corresponding to the modern King's County and Queen's County. The rebellion was sternly suppressed; the country of these clans was laid waste; and it was decided to carry out an entirely new settlement of the confiscated lands, in freeholds and leases after the English fashion. This was the first attempt at what came to be known as a 'plantation,' though as yet no distinction was made between English and Irish occupiers. It was carried out by Philip and Mary, whose memory is preserved in the names of King's County and Queen's County, with their capitals of Philips-

town and Maryborough. The plantation took root, but not without much trouble. The grantees found that they had to defend themselves against the old occupants ; all through the rest of the century there was wild business in this region, and great loss of life.

More serious was the trouble in Ulster, which resulted from Henry VIII.'s attempt to turn the head of the clan O'Neill into a territorial magnate of the English pattern. The clan denied the right of their chief to dispose of the clan lands as a family estate. They denied the right of the king to decide, by a patent, what should be the order of succession to the chieftain. Moreover the eldest son of the first Earl of Tyrone, who had been designated as his heir in the patent, was illegitimate. His younger but legitimate brother, Shane O'Neill, had been a boy when the patent was issued ; when he grew to manhood he had a claim which brought all the clansmen round him : he was standing not only for his personal rights, but for the ancient customs of the clan, and their rights over the clan lands. Soon after Henry VIII.'s death civil war broke out among the O'Neills, and Shane, a man of immense vigour, and capable of the most brutal cruelty, not only made himself leader of the clan, but proceeded to assert his authority over surrounding clans, once subject to the O'Neills. We cannot follow the wild story of his raids and wars, and especially of his alternate alliance and enmity with the other great Ulster clan, the O'Donnells of Donegal, and with the Highland M'Donnells who had recently made a settlement in Antrim. His power had reached a dangerous height, and Ulster was all aflame, when Elizabeth came to the throne. If the authority of the Crown was to mean anything, Shane must be brought to obedience ; especially as he was known to be intriguing with the Spaniards. An ✓ ineffective war raged at intervals from 1560 to 1567, when Shane, defeated by the O'Donnells, took refuge with the M'Donnells in Antrim, and was by them hacked to pieces in a drunken brawl. The English forces engaged in this strife were never strong enough to reach a clear decision ; largely because Elizabeth never had money enough to equip an adequate army. For the time Ulster was quiet ; the O'Neills and the O'Donnells were exhausted, and there was an uneasy peace. But Ulster, the wildest and fiercest region of Ireland, was by no means subdued.

Meanwhile yet graver trouble had broken out in the south. It was a sign of the beginning of national oppo-

sition in Ireland that, though there was no active co-operation between these two risings, there was communication between the leaders. The Ulster trouble arose from a tribal revolt of a kind that was to be expected. But in the Munster troubles a new and more perturbing element appeared : the element of religion.

§ 3. *Religious Conflict and the Munster Risings.*

We have seen that in Henry VIII.'s time no serious difficulty had been caused by the denial of papal supremacy, and that the Pope's first attempt to raise the banner of resistance, in 1541, had been a failure. But Henry VIII.'s changes had been political, not doctrinal ; they had involved practically no change in the order of service, which was still said in Latin. The changes made under Edward VI. and Elizabeth were quite another matter. The new faith might have had a chance of winning acceptance in Ireland if it had been introduced by persuasion, and in a form intelligible to the Irish ; for the Irish people are not by nature lovers of authority, despite their long fidelity to the most authoritarian of religions, and they had in the past shown no great zeal for Rome. But the English government made the incredible blunder of insisting not only that the new order of service should be everywhere introduced, but that it should be read in English, which was unintelligible to nine out of ten Irishmen. The new doctrines thus appeared as an unmeaning set of formulæ, forcibly imposed by a power which was already attacking the time-honoured customs of the clans and the traditional modes of holding land. Resistance to Protestantism naturally came to be identified with patriotism ; exactly the opposite to what had happened in England and Scotland.

In 1560 Pope Pius IV., seeing that Elizabeth (whatever she might pretend) was in fact an open heretic, determined to use Ireland as a stepping-stone for the recovery of England. Thus Irish opposition came to be regarded by Englishmen as imperilling the very existence of English freedom, at a time when it was threatened on all hands. The introduction into Irish politics of these new motives produced an embitterment which could only lead to the most horrible consequences.

The Pope's agents in this work were mainly Jesuit missionaries, of whom a steady stream was poured into Ireland from training-schools at Louvain, Douai and

Salamanca throughout the whole of Elizabeth's reign. The first of these was a Limerick man, David Wolfe, who landed at Cork in 1561. His instructions were not only to work for the revival of the Catholic faith, but to form a league of Irish chiefs for its defence. The first task came first, for hitherto the Irish chiefs had shown a remarkable indifference to the Catholic faith. But recent events had prepared the soil for the sowers. It might have been expected that Wolfe would have gone straight for Shane O'Neill, then in open revolt. But he regarded Shane as a 'cruel and impious heretic', he did not go near Ulster, but at first devoted himself to Munster, where his and his colleagues' preaching produced the beginnings of a real religious revival, combined with and strengthened by a passionate anti-English feeling. The more Jesuits came to Ireland, the more this feeling grew, spreading from Munster to the rest of Ireland, and conquering even the Pale. The English did their best to catch the Jesuits, but their hold over great parts of the country was so slight that they had small success.

In Munster the two most formidable powers were the great Anglo-Norman families of the Butlers, Earls of Ormond (corresponding to Tipperary), and the Fitzgeralds or Geraldines, Earls of Desmond (the greater part of County Cork). Of these the Butlers were always the most steadily loyal to the English connexion. From 1560 a private war had been raging (as often before) between these houses. Elizabeth insisted that the question at issue must be decided by government. The award of the Lord Deputy went in favour of Ormond, and as Desmond showed signs of resisting, and was suspected of complicity with Shane O'Neill, he was arrested (1567) and sent to London, with a charge of treason hanging over his head. In 1568 Desmond agreed to surrender his lands to the queen, of course on the assumption that he would receive them again and be allowed to return. But he was still detained, and some of the Devon adventurers, with the instincts of the pirate, began to besiege the queen with suggestions that the lands should be granted to them, and undertook to conquer them by their own resources. At the same time the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney—the ablest of Elizabeth's representatives in Ireland—was urgent that a President should be appointed to administer Munster, and to enforce English law throughout its limits. Undoubtedly there was need for the enforcement of law; but the suggestion that it should be associated

with a forcible occupation of land gave it a different colour, especially when some of the Devon adventurers, having purchased obsolete titles, appeared with bodies of retainers to make their claims good by force.

Under these circumstances a formidable revolt broke out in Munster in 1569, spreading from Kerry to Kilkenny. Its leader was James Fitzmaurice, a cousin of the Earl of Desmond, in whose absence he was able to wield all the influence of the Geraldines. He was one of the earliest and most devoted adherents of Wolfe. He was in connexion with Spain and hoped for Spanish aid. He was inspired at once by religious zeal and by hatred of England. Half the rest of Ireland was uneasy and ready for revolt; even in the Pale there was widespread discontent. The queen could spare no sufficient supplies of money, and only a force of some two thousand English troops was available. It seemed a fight of life and death for England; and under these circumstances the struggle, which lasted for four dreary and hideous years, assumed a character of ferocity on both sides uglier than was to be found in any of the other wars of that fierce age. No quarter was given. It was a war of extermination on both sides. The country was laid waste. The English garrisons, often unpaid, had to live by plunder. They hated the work they had to do, they hated the miserable people they had to pursue, and they were repaid by a hatred as intense. In the end (1573) Fitzmaurice had to be pardoned, Desmond had to be allowed to return, and the attempt to enforce English law had to be abandoned. Large parts of Munster had been desolated, but nothing else had been achieved. Certainly the Catholic and anti-English movement had not been crushed: the English officers reported that a foreign invasion would inevitably be followed by a general insurrection.

In face of such a situation it was obvious that if the English power was to be maintained, and Ireland was not to become a base for the overthrow of English freedom, some stronger measures must be taken. Lord Deputy Sidney got his way at last, and English presidents, supported by small forces, were appointed to govern Munster and Connaught. The value of the new officers was shown in 1577, when a revolt of the Burkes of Connaught was promptly and mercilessly crushed: 'I marched into their country,' the president reported, 'with determination to consume them with fire and sword, sparing neither old nor young.'

But this was not a happy mode of recommending English law and justice; and it was an ominous thing that Connaught, hitherto relatively undisturbed, should also be in revolt. Moreover in Ulster the situation was far from reassuring: the O'Neills and the O'Donnells were making friends, and were not to be trusted; the Earl of Essex, Governor of Ulster, had raised a hornets' nest by trying to make an English colony in Antrim, and only maintained a semblance of English authority with difficulty.

In 1579 the danger that might result from a foreign invasion was put to the test. James Fitzmaurice had gone abroad in 1575, to seek for aid in every quarter. He returned in June 1579, at the head of a motley force of Spaniards, Italians, Portuguese, Irish and English, and landed with them in Kerry: they had the Pope's blessing, and the unofficial backing of Philip II., who promised to send reinforcements later. Soon the Earl of Desmond rose in revolt. The presidents of Connaught and Munster at first prevented the revolt from spreading, and during the winter, with Ormond's help, inflicted the most awful vengeance upon the rebellious districts, 'consuming with fire all habitations,' says the English commander, 'and executing the people wherever we found them.' The small foreign force was captured and put to the sword. Desmond was almost overwhelmed, when (Aug. 1580) a revolt broke out among the Irish of the Pale, under Lord Baltinglas, who succeeded in inflicting a severe defeat upon the new Lord Deputy himself. Almost at this moment a small Spanish force, eluding the English ships in the Channel, reached Kerry and entrenched themselves at Smerwick. They could do nothing, because the country in front of them was a desert. But for a moment it looked as if the English power would collapse. Vigorous action, and fighting yet more pitiless than that which had gone before, removed the danger. The Spaniards, beset by sea and land, were forced to surrender at discretion, and all put to the sword. The leaders of the risings were one by one taken and executed. The war lingered on for another two years, filled rather with the hunting down of the unhappy rebels than with actual fighting. 'By 1584 peace was restored: 'they made a desert, and called it peace.' In 1582 it was estimated that thirty thousand souls had perished in six months, mainly of starvation.

One advantage of this wholesale destruction, from the English point of view, was that it left the field clear for an

English colony on some of the most fertile soil in Ireland. Grants of land were made to various 'undertakers,' on condition that they brought in English tenants of various grades and settled them on the land, and that they did not alienate their land to Irishmen. Some of the most distinguished men of the age took up grants, Sir Walter Raleigh and Edmund Spenser among them. But few of the gentry took the business seriously. Those who did found little solace for their exile among a 'savage nation,' as Spenser called the Irish in his *State of Ireland*. Ere long the dispossessed Irish or their children were drifting back, and in due time Munster was as Irish as it had ever been, though the old land system and the old clan rule had gone. Order, at any rate, was more or less established in this region: there were few left to disturb it.

§ 4 *The Irish National Rising under Tyrone*

For more than ten years after the second Munster rising Ireland enjoyed an interval of broken peace. No doubt the destruction of the Armada, which for the time removed all hope of help from Spain, partly accounted for this, though the firm and stern rule of Sir John Perrot did much. But after the wreck of his hopes at sea in 1588, Philip II. trusted more to Ireland than to any other factor in his struggle against England. His emissaries, aided by the Jesuit missionaries, were constantly at work. In the 'nineties he began to have hopes from Ulster. Here the old feud which had divided the O'Neills of Tyrone had been brought to an end. Hugh O'Neill, grandson and heir of the chief upon whom Henry VIII. had conferred the title of Earl of Tyrone, had been brought over by the English and supported by them in Armagh, as a check upon Shane O'Neill's successor in the chiefship, Turlough. Hugh Earl of Tyrone, played the part of a loyal friend to England for many long years, and actually helped to put down the Munster rebellion. But he made friends with his rival Turlough, was accepted as his 'Tanist,' or successor-designate, and in 1593 succeeded to the chiefship of the whole O'Neill tribe. He also struck up a close friendship with Hugh Roe O'Donnell, who in 1591 had become chief of the O'Donnell clan, the ancient rival of the O'Neills; and Hugh Roe was an eager Catholic and anti-English man. Perhaps it was Hugh Roe's influence which determined Tyrone to break with the English, perhaps the fear that the English would repeat in Ulster

the plantation scheme they had carried out in Munster—a fear not without justification; anyway the two great chiefs of the north got into secret relations with Philip II.; and meanwhile were actively extending their influence over the neighbouring clans. In 1595 they broke the peace, Tyrone ravaging Louth while O'Donnell invaded Connaught. A peace was made in 1596, but there was a new outbreak in 1597, ended by a truce which expired in 1598.

In August 1598, renewing the war, Tyrone inflicted on the English, at the Yellow Ford, the worst defeat they had yet endured in Ireland. At the same time a rising broke out in Connaught; the O'Mores and O'Conors rose to redress their ancient grievances in Leinster; and a force led by Tyrone into Munster drove the settlers in the new plantation to take refuge in the towns. For the first time the English had to deal with an almost universal national revolt. On all hands and in all the provinces, chiefs who had accepted the English system were replaced by rivals. If Philip II. could at this moment have landed a substantial force in Ireland, the country might have been lost to England. But no Spanish army appeared.

To deal with this grave menace Elizabeth sent her domineering young favourite, the Earl of Essex, with the highest powers yet entrusted to a viceroy, and at the head of the biggest English army yet seen in Ireland—16,000 foot and 1300 horse. Essex, who may have been playing some deep game of his own, did nothing effectual, and offered to Tyrone, who was glad to accept them, terms so favourable that they were repudiated by the government. The favourite lost for ever the friendship of the queen (1599): two years later he was executed for an attempt to raise a rebellion in England.

The war was renewed in 1600, and again flamed out in all parts of the country. But by hard fighting Essex's successor, Lord Mountjoy, had by 1601 broken the back of the rebellion, when the news came that a large force of Spaniards, 5000 troops with siege-guns, had been landed at Kinsale by a fleet of thirty-three ships. The long expected Spanish aid had come; but it had come too late. Though the revolt flickered up again, and Tyrone and O'Donnell marched to Munster to join forces with the invaders, it was no longer possible to restore the situation. The Spaniards were blockaded from the sea by an English squadron, which successfully beat off a Spanish fleet sent to their relief; on land they were beset by Mountjoy, whom Tyrone

attacked with results disastrous to himself, losing 2000 men, while the English lost only one man. In January 1602, the Spaniards capitulated; and although the war lingered on for another year, from that moment the complete failure of the last and most serious attempt to prevent the English conquest of Ireland was assured. Tyrone submitted just after Elizabeth died. The great queen's reign had begun with the coming of the Jesuit missionaries to an indifferent, turbulent, tribal Ireland. It ended with Ireland Catholic but conquered; its tribal system overthrown, and large areas of its land in the hands of English settlers. To Elizabeth's successor was left the problem of settlement.

The story which has been outlined in this chapter is one of the most forbidding and depressing episodes in the whole of our long history. It left manifold seeds of ill, from which the whole British Commonwealth still suffers. It taught, or ought to have taught, the lesson that mere brute force is never by itself a remedy, and that the attempt to destroy the character and institutions of a people brings its own punishment, even after many days.

Yet in justice to the men of this great age, who worked such blended good and ill, let it be remembered that the enforcement of order in Ireland by the curbing of tribal anarchy was in itself not only a legitimate aim, but a duty imposed upon the English by the force of events. It was done in the wrong way, without sympathy or understanding, and without that firmness and strength which are necessary when such work has to be done. For the lack of strength the poverty rather than the parsimony of Elizabeth was mainly to blame: in view of the state of England during the early years of her reign she dared not impose heavy taxation, and the subjugation of Ireland was a costly business—in the last four years of her reign Ireland cost 30 *per cent.* more than the total revenues of these years. For the lack of sympathy and understanding the blame is deeper. But it is part of the explanation, if it is no excuse, for the barbarity with which the conquest was effected, that all the acrimony of religious difference was enlisted on both sides; that the age was one of ferocity in war; and that the Englishmen who fought in Munster and in Ulster, mere handfuls of men, ill-supported and often ill-led, felt that they were fighting not merely for dominion, but also and mainly for the very existence of their own country, which was threatened by the looming terror of an attack

from the mighty power of Spain, and which could be most dangerously struck at through Ireland. The fighting in Ireland may perhaps have meant the freedom of England, and of all that English freedom has meant for the world : but it left a legacy of evil memories and of smouldering hates.

[Richey, *Short History of the Irish People* ; Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors* (3 vols.) ; R. Dunlop's chapter in the *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. iii.]

the Norman baronage, nor to rival and browbeat the Crown, like the baronage of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They played a very important part in the government of the country, filling the House of Lords, always having some of the chief places at the queen's council-board, and acting as lords-lieutenant for the queen in their counties. Aristocratic sentiment demanded that from among them should always be drawn the formal leaders of any great national enterprise : thus the Earl of Leicester was sent to lead the army in the Netherlands ; Lord Howard of Effingham must captain the navy, over the heads of Drake, Hawkins and Frobisher ; and the Earl of Essex must take command of the army of Ireland. They lived in much splendour, and in an age devoted to pageantry spent much of their wealth on display : witness, for example, Leicester's gorgeous *jête* which Scott has described in *Kenilworth*. It was they who maintained the companies of actors who produced the innumerable dramas of the period : but for their patronage the players would have stood in danger of the pillory as strolling vagabonds.

Next to them in dignity came the country squires : a very large class, dwelling in thousands of manor houses scattered over every part of England : landowners, living among their tenantry, and spending great part of their time in sports, in some of which their humbler neighbours and tenants could join. The country gentry had an immensely important part to play in the economy of Tudor England. From among them were drawn the Justices of the Peace, the unpaid men-of-all-work of the Tudor monarchy. It was their duty not only to maintain public order, try minor offences, and arrest and keep for trial by the king's travelling judges persons charged with major offences, but also to carry out a multitude of administrative duties, and generally to act as the local agents of the Privy Council. They looked to the main roads ; they licensed inns ; they fined religious recusants ; they saw to the proper apprenticing of young people ; to a large extent they fixed prices and wages ; they had to deal with rogues and vagabonds, and to supervise the measures for the administration of poor relief, a function which became very important in the later years of the reign. Without their work the whole system of government must have broken down ; and theirs is largely the credit (under the direction of the Privy Council) for the good order which on the whole marked this period throughout England. To

train themselves for these varied functions the sons of the landed gentry often went up to London, to undergo at the Temple a period of training in the laws of the land. Here was a class widely experienced in administrative work, and yet not ignorant of the science and practice of the laws of England. Such men filled the benches of the House of Commons. Their younger sons became clergymen, barristers, soldiers, sailors, and often even took to trade—especially to the higher branches of the wool trade. Later they led parties of emigrants from among their fathers' tenantry to the New World, or to the Irish plantations. It was this class which provided most of the leaders of seafaring expeditions and other adventures. This class, too, was the most politically active in the community, and for that reason it naturally took the lead in public affairs during the next century.

Below them came the yeomanry, working farmers tilling their own land—still a very numerous class in England; and with them may be linked the men who worked farms rented from the magnates or the squires. This class has often been described as the backbone of England. It was solid, conservative, and fairly prosperous. (It had its due function in the life of the community: the management of village affairs, the care of the local roads, the detailed administration of poor relief were commonly in the hands of men of this class.) The substantial yeoman, indeed, was often little below the smaller squire; the humbler members of this class shaded gradually into the peasantry, very many of whom had their own plots of land, though many were landless, living by hiring out their labour.

The classes whom we have enumerated under the name of the peasantry formed, of course, the great majority of the population. They were practically all illiterate; so, indeed, were a large proportion of the yeomanry, everywhere save in the more advanced districts of the south-east. It follows that the great bulk of these classes could have no effective knowledge of, or interest in, national affairs. Communications were slow and bad. There were no newspapers, and no public meetings. Except the gentry, few ever left their native villages; and it was only when news percolated downwards from the gentry (and little enough reached even them), or when ideas were promulgated by the pulpit, that even the vaguest notions about political questions could reach the mass of the people. When writers about this and the next age speak of 'the nation' as thinking this or

resolving on that, the extremely limited knowledge of public affairs possessed by the great bulk of 'the nation' must not be forgotten. 'The nation,' in fact, as an active political body, meant the gentry, some of the ycomanry, and the more lively but as yet very small population of the towns—only the biggest events made any impression upon the rest.

Although the classes of rural English society (which formed at least five-sixths of the nation) were thus clearly marked, and distinctions between them were universally accepted and respected—they were classes, and not castes, that is to say, they were not rigid—men could, and constantly did, rise or fall out of the class into which they were born, and each class shaded off insensibly into its neighbours. That was one of the marked distinctions between England and other European nations. Even the nobility was not a caste—not only were new families frequently ennobled—the greater part of the nobility indeed, was of quite recent creation—but the sons of a noble did not inherit his nobility but became commoners. And at the other end of the scale, England was the one country of the West in which serfdom had practically disappeared—no man was tied for life to labour on the soil of a lord. The English were a nation of free men, and as we have seen, a very large number of them had a share in the business of managing common affairs—the affairs of the village or the county, if not those of the country as a whole. In a real sense, therefore, England was a free and self-governing country, the only one except Switzerland in the world.

More or less apart from the hierarchy of rural society stood the society of the towns—engaged in trade or in industry. There were some two hundred little boroughs in England, most of them little more than villages, but they had their own system of government—usually under a town council of the leading burghers—who commonly sat for life and filled up vacancies as they occurred in their own number. This was not a democratic system, but it meant that a large number of people were engaged in managing common affairs, and in many boroughs the whole body of freemen had substantial powers—electing the Mayor and sometimes other officers. Most of the small boroughs, being merely market-towns serving the needs of the surrounding countryside, were very closely connected with rural life, and naturally much under the influence of the neighbouring gentry. But there were a few seaports which

were beginning to prosper through the growth of foreign trade, and a few inland centres of manufacturing activity, wherein there were substantial merchants more independent of the gentry. Such were Bristol and Norwich, Southampton and Hull. But London was the only big centre which had any vigorous independent life of its own. It was the centre of all the most important trade, and its rich merchants, its corporation, its powerful and wealthy city companies, constituted a factor of very great importance in the life of the nation. In London, at any rate, political knowledge was considerable; even the apprentices had their political opinions.

§ 3. *Economic Changes.*

A very considerable change had been coming over the social condition of England during the sixteenth century, under the pressure of big economic movements, and the effects of these movements were already clearly apparent in Elizabeth's reign.

In the first place the mediaeval system of land-cultivation in village communities was beginning to break down—only beginning, for the process was not completed for more than two centuries. The chief cause of this was the enclosure movement, and the devotion of large areas of land to sheep-pasture instead of corn-growing. We have already seen¹ something of the trouble which this had given in the middle of the century, and how it had been accentuated by the suppression of the monasteries, and the sometimes high-handed and unsympathetic policy of the new owners of monastic lands. This change threw many labourers out of work, and led to a great deal of unrest, disorder and vagabondage. It puzzled government, from Henry VIII.'s time onwards, to know how to deal with this. At first mere severity was tried: and under Edward VI. very cruel measures were taken—the wandering man without work was made practically liable to slavery. Enclosures were still going on in Elizabeth's reign, but the problem was becoming much less difficult. This was partly because the growth of industry found employment for a good deal of surplus labour, partly because many of the idle found an outlet in overseas adventures. It was to provide for such men that Sir Humphrey Gilbert and others advocated the foundation of colonies; and indeed it is probably true that the unsettlement of the old order, and the existence in

¹ See above, pp. 217, 258, 264.

England of a large number of men uprooted from their old modes of life, formed one of the reasons why England became a great colonising country. If every man in England had had land of his own, and a secure livelihood few would have wanted to seek homes in new lands.

But one of the reasons why the problem of uprooted labour and of vagabondage was becoming less, was that the government of Elizabeth gradually found its way to a wiser mode of dealing with these difficulties. It slowly realised, first that it was unjust to punish men merely for being poor and out of work, and secondly, that it was the duty of the community to provide for its poor. In a long series of Acts, which culminated in the great Poor Law of 1601, provision was made for the levying of rates to relieve poverty, and to provide work for the able-bodied. The responsibility for this new system (which, though it was rather unsympathetic, does represent the acceptance of a new responsibility on the part of the community for the welfare of its more unfortunate members) was thrown upon the parishes, and the poor rates were collected, and in detail distributed by unpaid overseers elected by the parish vestry which every ratepayer was entitled to attend. But the always active justices of the peace were charged with the duty of defining the rules under which this relief should be given in each county, as well as of regulating wages and seeing that able-bodied men were put to work.

If agriculture, and the rural society which depended on it, were undergoing change so also were industry and commerce. Beyond all comparison the most important of English industries was the woollen manufacture. It had begun as an important industry, in the fourteenth century but it was now more prosperous than ever before, and its chief centres—the West country (Wiltshire and the surrounding counties), Norfolk, and Yorkshire—now spun and wove into cloth nearly the whole product of the English sheep. Their success was certainly helped by the wars in the Netherlands, which ruined the prosperity of the Flemish towns, so long the principal consumers of English wool and sent thousands of the best artisans in Europe to take refuge in England. The wool trade affords a striking illustration of the interlacing of all the nation's economic interests. For it was because the demand for wool was so great that the landowners were cultivating sheep where corn had once been grown, and it was because England had, in her woollen cloths (now among the best in the

world), commodities which found a ready sale abroad that her foreign trade was advancing.

It was not only in the woollen industry, however, but in many different spheres, that a new vigour and enterprise were now showing themselves in manufacture. And under these conditions the mediæval organisation of industry was inevitably breaking down, just as the mediæval organisation of agriculture was breaking down. In the Middle Ages manufacture had in the main been carried on by the actual craftsman, who worked in his own home with his journeymen and apprentices, and sold the products of his industry in the market; and the conditions under which journeymen and apprentices might be employed, the number that a master-workman might engage, the varieties, qualities, measurements and prices of the goods which he might make, and in general all the rules governing production, were fixed by guilds or associations of the master-workmen themselves in every town. But this system, though it had many advantages, had also marked defects. It formed a great restraint upon individual enterprise or initiative: the man with new methods and ideas found it hard to persuade his fellow-craftsmen to let him adopt them, because they feared to be done out of their trade. It also prevented the organisation of industry on a large scale, because it forbade the man with substantial resources to employ a large number of workpeople.

For a long time past, in all the more progressive countries, the management of industry had been tending to fall into the hands of a class of employers who did not work, as a rule, with their own hands, but organised and paid for the work of other people. The 'capitalist' employer was becoming the dominant factor in industry. And it is easy to see how and why this happened, and how it stimulated the development of industry. In the woollen industry, for example, an enterprising and far-seeing man, if he commanded a sufficient amount of money, could buy wool of the best quality, instead of being dependent (like the master craftsman) upon what happened to come into the local market; he could get it spun by women over a wide area, paying them for their work; he could get to know what styles and patterns would command the readiest sale in the most profitable markets at home or abroad, and pay weavers to weave the cloth according to these requirements. And by these means he could generally produce the cloth that was required both better and cheaper than it could be

produced under the old system. But he could only do this if he had command of substantial amounts of money or 'capital' to finance the work at each stage, that is to say, if he was a 'capitalist'. Without a doubt the 'capitalist' system, under which the employer devoted himself to studying the markets and organising the work of groups of work-people instead of working with his own hands, very largely contributed to the development and improvement of the English manufacturing industry. But it involved the breakdown of the old gild system, with its elaborate regulations and restrictions. And it tended to diminish the independence of the workman, whom it turned into a wage-earner more or less at the mercy of his employer, and without the protection which the gilds had formerly given.

The process of change from the gild system to a rudimentary capitalist system had been going on gradually and quietly for a very long time. But it became more rapid in the second half of the sixteenth century, partly because the growth of foreign trade encouraged it, and partly, perhaps, because the changes in agriculture created a workless class who were glad to be employed by the capitalist. If the change had taken place without any regulation or control, it might have inflicted grave hardships. But the government of Elizabeth was too intelligent to let this happen. It did its best to maintain a sound standard of life among the workpeople under the new conditions, and to give them some of the protection which the gilds had earlier afforded, by means of legislation about apprenticeship, wages and prices. These provisions were on the whole salutary and well-designed. They fell far short, however, of the elaborate regulations of the old gilds, and individual enterprise in industry was permitted to enjoy far more freedom than the Middle Ages had ever been willing to allow to it.

Of the growth of overseas trade we have already said something. But it was in the last part of the reign that it grew most rapidly. English traders were busy in the Netherlands, in France, in the Baltic, in the Mediterranean. Once the ocean monopoly of Spain had been broken, they were eager to stretch forth their hands for a share of the trade of the tropics and the New World, but the main developments in these fields naturally belonged to the next period. For the encouragement and assistance of trade in more distant waters, the men of this age, with the assistance of the government, developed new methods. They organised trading companies, which were not (like the companies of

to-day) joint-stock ventures, trading with a large subscribed capital: the Muscovy Company or the Levant Company in the Elizabethan period was simply a body of licensed traders, who subscribed to maintain permanent agencies abroad, but each carried on their individual ventures, or subscribed what they thought fit to the cost of fitting out particular 'voyages.' At the very end of the reign, in 1600, the greatest of all these trading companies, the East India Company, was established under royal charter, to develop the opportunities of trade in the East. Thus English trade, though it had government encouragement, was not subject to any such detailed and stifling government control as the trade of both Spain and Portugal had suffered from. Its development was due to individual enterprise, under government supervision, but not government control. And it thrived largely because it could draw upon the vigour of individual enterprise.

(No one who studies the history of this period can fail to be struck by the alertness of Elizabeth's government, its high sense of responsibility for the national welfare, and its readiness to try experiments to meet new conditions.) It felt that it was its business to guide the nation through a period of rapid change and growth, and not to leave its development to accident. On the whole its interventions were fairly successful in the spheres of industry and commerce. Its regulations gave a great deal of free play to individual effort; at the same time they saved the country from the confusion which might have followed the sudden and unchecked dissolution of old methods of organisation.

§ 4. *The Religious Changes.*

Of all the aspects of national life there was none in which the guidance and control of government seemed to Elizabeth and her councillors to be more necessary than religion, for in other lands religious differences were producing national ruin. Elizabeth had no desire, as she once put it, 'to open windows into men's souls.' Her subjects might think what they pleased, so long as they did nothing that ran counter to the unity of the nation: not for her was the duty of burning men's bodies because their thoughts were wrong. But she desired uniformity and decency in external things, and she could not understand those who quarrelled about these externals, regarding them as symbols. She desired also that authority should be duly maintained: her own

authority in the first instance, as the supreme governor of the national Church—that is, of the nation in its ecclesiastical aspect; the authority of her bishops, as her agents, in the second. Her control over the Church was exercised not only through the bishops (and mainly the Archbishop of Canterbury), but through the High Commission, largely consisting of bishops, which was set up at the beginning of the reign, and had its powers amplified and defined by a succession of instruments, culminating in the Commission of 1583. This body exercised judicial and to some extent legislative powers (for those two functions of government were not clearly distinguished) not merely over clergymen, but over the whole nation in all religious and ecclesiastical matters. It was not bound by the common law of the land, nor did it follow the ordinary procedure of the common law courts: for example, it administered what was known as the *ex officio* oath, which compelled men to give evidence against themselves, contrary to the practice of English law, and it had a very wide latitude in the punishments which it inflicted.

Because the great majority of her people were, at the beginning of her reign, definitely Catholic in sentiment, Elizabeth desired that the doctrines and orders of service of the national Church should be so defined as to offend their susceptibilities as little as possible, and in external things she was anxious to keep nearly to the old ways. She hoped that the Catholics in England would gradually become accustomed to, and accept, the new order; and in this she was not disappointed: the great majority of Englishmen had become reconciled to the national Church before the end of her reign, all the more readily because loyalty to Rome had become unpatriotic during the struggle with Spain. There was little or no persecution of Catholics as such: only small fines for non-attendance at church. The comparatively few Catholics who were put to death were executed as traitors, as agents of the foreign power of the Pope, or as conspirators against the realm, not on the ground of their religious opinions.

But this policy brought the queen into sharp conflict with the more enthusiastic Protestants. There were a good many of these even at the beginning of the reign, especially in London and other towns, and in the prosperous south-east; and as the reign went on, and the struggle against Rome, not only in England but in all the continental countries, became more fierce and bitter,

they grew in numbers and enthusiasm, and their desire to purify the Church of England from what they regarded as relics of papistry became stronger. They did not desire mere toleration for themselves; they desired to reshape the national Church after their own minds, and they drew their inspiration from the fierce creed of Calvin, which was in Europe the fighting doctrine of Protestantism, and which had under Knox's guidance shaped both the creed and the system of government of the Scottish Church. From Elizabeth's point of view there could be no compromise with these men, loyal as they were to her in the struggle with Spain; because they stood for a challenge to the whole organisation and government of the national Church, and would, if they had their way (so she believed) shatter the unity of England, her greatest achievement. The idea that there could be more than one Church in the same State scarcely anybody entertained, either in England or elsewhere: it would have seemed as impossible to most of the Puritans as to Elizabeth herself.

As the reign wore on the conflict between Elizabeth and the bishops on the one hand, and the Puritans on the other, deepened and broadened. It began with a controversy about vestments. Elizabeth wished that, as far as possible, the traditional priestly vestments should be used, and that there should be uniformity of practice. The Puritans objected to priestly vestments, even to the surplice, because these were in their eyes symbols of Rome and of the claims of the priesthood. When Archbishop Parker, in 1566, issued a series of 'Advertisements' to define and enforce the proper usage, thirty-seven London clergymen refused compliance, and some of them were deprived of their livings. A violent pamphlet warfare sprang up: the chief pamphleteers on the Puritan side were thereupon forbidden to preach, and some of them were imprisoned. They took to holding secret conventicles. From vestments the controversy spread to rites and to doctrines; and, since the obnoxious rules were imposed by bishops, the Puritans began to challenge the whole episcopal system, and indirectly the supremacy of the Crown which lay behind it. The huge incomes of the bishops (they were richer than most of the peers) and the powers exercised by the ecclesiastical courts provided further grounds for attack. *An Admonishment to Parliament*, published in 1572 by two Puritan clergymen (who were promptly clapped into Newgate), showed how far the movement was going. They

demanding in effect the abolition of the episcopal system 'At the beginning,' commented one orthodox clergyman, 'it was but a cap or surplice and a tippet, now it is grown to bishops, archbishops, and cathedral churches, to the overthrow of established order, and to the queen's authority in causes ecclesiastical. These reformers would take the supreme authority in ecclesiastical matters from the prince, and give it unto themselves with the grave seignory in every parish.' The archbishop with a shrewd prophecy, foretold that the Puritans would 'in conclusion undo the queen and all others that depended on her.' But the queen's power was strong enough to quell these controversies, at all events for a time.

The leader of the Puritan movement was Cartwright, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge. He was an uncompromising advocate of the Presbyterian system of Church government, which ultimately rests upon a democratic basis. Others went still further, notably Robert Browne, another Cambridge man, who claimed that each congregation ought to be self-sufficing and independent, and that neither bishop nor presbyteries should be necessary for the ordination of ministers of religion, and he tried to set up a working model of his system at Norwich in 1581. There were a good many Brownists, ancestors of the future Independents. But Presbyterians (who, as they had shown in Scotland, believed in uniformity and made high claims for the powers of a national Church) condemned the Brownists as vigorously as did Elizabeth. Several Brownists suffered on the scaffold as traitors, because they denied the royal supremacy. There were other sects too, Anabaptists among them, all following their doctrines in secret.

During the middle part of the reign, however, controversy was comparatively stilled, partly because of the Spanish danger, partly because the Archbishopric of Canterbury was held by the mild Grindal, who sympathised with the Puritans, and let them carry on their 'prophesyings.' But after 1588, when the Spanish danger was over, and Grindal had been succeeded by the unbending Whitgift (1583), conflict broke out again with greater vigour than ever. Now, too, the Elizabethan Church had taken firm root in the affections of the nation: it was no longer a mere political compromise, but had won the whole-hearted allegiance of many, a High Church party was springing up. On the other hand the Puritans were also eager for bolder action: in 1590 Cartwright started associations in various parts of

England, for the organisation of 'classes' and 'synods'—church councils on the Presbyterian model. This was a defiance of the royal supremacy which could not pass unregarded: the leaders of the Puritan party were brought before the High Commission and the Star Chamber. But they were released after an apology: they had too big a following to make it wise to punish them. Meanwhile a violent press controversy, perhaps the first in English history to arouse a widespread public interest, had broken out (1588-9). From a secret press, which was moved from place to place, a series of frequent, hard-hitting tracts appeared, under the name of *Martin Marprelate*. The authors of the Marprelate tracts, whoever they were, were fighting not only for Puritanism, but for the freedom of the press; for Whitgift, in his determination to crush the movement, had obtained a Star Chamber decree forbidding any manuscript to be printed unless it had been previously licensed by himself or the Bishop of London.

Thus the religious controversy was spreading into a political controversy. The Puritans were beginning to challenge some of the powers exercised by the Crown, besides advocating a democratic organisation of the Church. And indeed it was inevitable that their doctrines should lead them to be friendly to popular influence in government. Whitgift's charge against them was that, under a show of godliness, they nourished 'contempt of magistrates and popularity'; and by 'popularity,' he meant popular power. It is significant that throughout Elizabeth's reign there was always a considerable Puritan element in Parliament: her difficulties with Parliament most often turned upon Church questions. It is impossible to say what was the number of the Puritans: the fact that there were many Puritan members of Parliament tells us nothing about their strength, because Parliament was not in any true sense a popularly elected body. But it is certain that by the end of the reign they were numerous in London, in most towns, and all over the south-east; and that they included a large number of the ablest and most intelligent men in the country, and had a strong hold over the University of Cambridge.

§ 5. *The Queen and her Parliament.*

It is plain from what we have already seen that the real government of England rested with the queen and her council. They fixed the country's foreign policy, and

provided for its defence. They regulated and controlled the Church. They supervised and directed the economic policy of the country. They were responsible for the maintenance of order, through the justices of the peace, and supervised the administration of the law by judges and juries : juries who gave unsound verdicts were without hesitation haled before Star Chamber. In all these functions Parliament had scarcely a word to say. All the powers of the royal prerogative against which opposition was bitterest under the Stewarts were freely exercised by Elizabeth, commonly without complaint. She levied contributions like ship-money ; she imposed new customs duties ; she exercised the power of dispensing individuals from the operation of particular laws ; she imprisoned men with no more definite ground than the special command of the queen ; she issued many proclamations having the force of law. She was able to do all these things because hers was a national monarchy, the trusted spokesman and representative of the nation, defending the nation's existence against grave perils.

But for all that it is a mistake to think of Elizabeth's government as a despotism. Her power could not have lasted if it had not been based upon national approval, and this for two reasons : she had no paid army to enforce her will ; and she had no class of salaried officials spread over the country to carry out her policy, whether it was approved or not. She had to depend upon the unpaid country gentlemen for all this work ; and the country gentlemen were, of all classes in England, the most politically active, and the most ready to resist any serious oppression, as they showed in Parliament.

Moreover she had to count with Parliament ; and Parliament, as we have seen, had never been in any true sense a ' subservient ' body, except in the latter part of Henry VIII.'s reign. Elizabeth did not like having to deal with Parliament ; she found it a fractious and meddlesome body, and summoned it as seldom as she could. But she had to summon it thirteen times during her reign. And she had to summon it just because its co-operation was necessary for the passing of important laws, and still more for the levying of the most productive taxes. Elizabeth had a large revenue independent of parliamentary grants, from Crown lands, from feudal dues of various sorts, and from the customs duties, which by immemorial prescription belonged to the Crown, though they were by custom granted afresh at the

beginning of each reign. She was as frugal as possible and did her best to make this revenue cover the cost of government, partly because taxes were unpopular, and partly to avoid meeting Parliament; she even strained the royal prerogative, like the Stewarts after her, to find modes of raising revenue; and, as we have seen, she adopted every means of enlisting private effort even in the conduct of war.

In fact, England was the most lightly taxed country in Europe. Parliament was undeniably stingy in its grants; and as the assessments upon which the grants were made had not been changed since the fourteenth century, they yielded extremely disappointing returns. Frugal as she was, Elizabeth had to run into debt, and to sell Crown lands on a large scale. But this is in itself a proof that the control of Parliament over the revenues of the country was still real, and could not be overridden even by Elizabeth.

In every one of Elizabeth's parliaments there was abundant evidence that though the members, like the country as a whole, respected the queen and supported her general policy, they were not ready to sacrifice any of their own rights, and did not lack courage in standing up for their privileges. The queen frequently rated them for presuming beyond their rights, especially when they ventured to discuss her marriage, or to criticise her Church policy, as they often did very sharply; 'Beware how you prove your prince's patience,' she told them in 1567. Rarely a session passed without one or more members being committed to prison; and in 1593 five members were sent to the Tower for venturing to discuss the succession to the crown, one of them, Peter Wentworth, the staunchest upholder of parliamentary privilege, remaining in duress till he died three years later. She used in a wholesale way the power of vetoing bills: in the Parliament of 1598 she vetoed no less than forty-eight out of ninety-one.

But if these facts show that Elizabeth was far indeed from submitting to parliamentary control, they show also that Parliament was tenacious of its powers and courageous in enforcing them, even against a much-loved sovereign. If many bills were vetoed, it is clear that Parliament was active in legislation, and did not leave the initiative in that respect to the Crown, as it did under Henry VIII. If members had to be scolded and imprisoned for insisting upon discussing questions of public policy which were,

by usage, decided by the queen and her council, manifestly they were striving to take a larger part in the determination of the national destinies.

Three features of the relation between the queen and her parliaments ought to be noted. In the first place it was the House of Commons, not the House of Lords, which played the active part: the House of Lords was already falling into the background. That is to say, it was the country gentlemen and the lawyers (for the House of Commons was filled with country gentlemen and lawyers) who were striving to attain a real partnership with the Crown in the government of the country—a far different state of things from that which had marked the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when the House of Commons was largely controlled by parties of great barons. In the second place, every Parliament of the reign showed a large number, and some apparently a majority, of members who were Puritan in their sympathies. Most of their differences with the queen arose on religious questions. That is to say, a large proportion of the men who sat in the House of Commons was affected by ideas which almost inevitably led in the direction of increased popular control. In the third place, the independence of the House of Commons and its readiness to come into conflict with the queen became much more marked towards the end of the reign, in spite of the loyalty and affection which all felt for the great princess who had guided the country through a perilous pass. That is to say, once the period of danger was over, men began to feel that the time had come when the discretionary power of the Crown was no longer needed to the same extent; and when Parliament could begin to claim a greater share in the control of national affairs.

During her last years and in her last three parliaments, Elizabeth seemed almost to have lost touch with her people, or with those highly important elements in it whose ideas were expressed by the House of Commons. The discontent reached its height in the Parliament of 1601, when a vigorous attack—not the first by any means, but the most strongly pressed—was made against the wholesale licences which the queen had granted to various individuals, giving them the monopoly of the right to manufacture various commodities.¹ Some of these licences were of the nature of patents, and had the effect of encouraging new industries; but others were undoubtedly mischievous. The temper of the House of Commons became ugly: they proposed

to introduce a bill to abolish all monopolies, which would have been a direct challenge to the queen. Elizabeth was too wise to risk an open conflict. By proclamation she abolished all monopolies at a blow; and in a speech to her faithful Commons not only won back all their affection, but made a claim for herself that they could echo in their hearts, and that might fairly be inscribed as her epitaph.—

‘ Though God hath raised me high, yet this I count the glory of my crown: that I have reigned with your loves. To be a king and wear a crown is a thing more glorious to them that see it than it is pleasing to them that bear it. For myself, I was never so much enticed with the glorious name of a king, or royal authority of a queen, as delighted that God had made me His instrument to maintain His truth and glory, and to defend this kingdom from peril, dishonour, tyranny and oppression ’

She died eighteen months later, without seeing the inevitable issue raised between the royal authority which she had wielded so royally, and the aspirations of the nation which she had taught to be proud of its nationhood. With her died an era. The ages of purely island history were over; so also, for England, was the age of willing submission to royal tutelage: and after their long preparation the peoples of the islands were about to enter upon a career of world-influence, and upon a bold advance, ahead of all other peoples, towards the ideal of national self-government. What is more, they were entering upon the new era as a group of States united under the same crown: as a Commonwealth of Nations differing from one another yet indissolubly linked together. For the successor of Elizabeth was James VI. of Scotland, great-grandson of Henry VII., and with his accession the long centuries of strife between the peoples of the islands came formally to an end.

[For the literary movements of the time, Saintsbury's *Elizabethan Literature*, Lee's *Shakespeare*, Raleigh's *Shakespeare*, Church's *Spenser*, and other volumes of the English Men of Letters Series, for social and economic conditions, *The England of Shakespeare* (Clarendon Press), Meredith's *Economic History of England*, Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, Unwin's *Industrial Organisation in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Tawney's *Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century* for religious history, Frere's *English Church in the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I.*, Neal's *History of the Puritans*, for politics and Parliament, Prothero's *Constitutional Documents*, Hallam's *Constitutional History*, Pollard's *England from the Death of Henry VIII. to the Death of Elizabeth*]

BOOK IV

THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL SELF-GOVERN-
MENT; AND THE BEGINNINGS OF ENGLISH
EXPANSION OVERSEA, A D. 1603-1660

INTRODUCTION

IN the first half of the seventeenth century the peoples of the islands began to build on the foundations already laid.

In the first place, they appeared for the first time as a single unit in the life of the civilised world. They were united under the rule of a single crown by the succession of James VI. of Scotland to the thrones of England and Ireland. Not that they were as yet in any real sense united into a single State. Scotland retained its distinct existence, with its own body of law, its own Parliament, and, above all, its own Church, and there was as yet little friendship between the two nations; but the mutual influence of England and Scotland became more intimate and constant than it had ever been before. Ireland was a recently conquered country; unfortunately it was her fate to suffer in this period troubles even greater than she had suffered in the last; the opportunity of fostering friendship, which was still open in 1603, was lost; and still bitterer memories than those of Elizabeth's reign were created. Nevertheless the union of the islands under a single crown meant much.

In the second place, now that the barriers to ocean traffic raised by Spain were broken down, the English began the task of creating new Englands beyond the seas, and of developing a great trade in the tropics and the East. Colonies were founded on the Atlantic shore of North America and in the West Indies; and although their beginnings were timid, and little supported by the power of the State, they were well established by the middle of the century. Almost from their foundation these first English settlements oversea were distinguished from the colonies of other nations by the establishment of the practice of local self-government, which had become second nature to the English. At the same time the trade connexion with India, which was to lead to astonishing results, was begun in these years, and well rooted. These were, as yet, almost purely English enterprises: the day of the

full participation of all the islanders in them had not yet come. But England was not the only pioneer in this field. All the seaboard countries of Europe took a share, and an acute rivalry for colonies and overseas trade began, which was to last till our own day, and to affect deeply the relations of the European States. In this period the most successful rivals of the English were their recent allies, the Dutch : their mutual jealousy was such as to lead to war.

In the third place the development which had already been foreshadowed in the previous age took place ; and both the English and the Scottish peoples—and even, in a certain measure, the Irish—began to work out a system not merely of local or of ecclesiastical, but of national self-government. The great controversies, resulting in civil war, to which these aspirations gave rise, form the main stuff of the history of the islands during the half century. They were of equal moment for the whole of the future Commonwealth, since they reacted upon the development of the institutions of all its members, and decided that all were to enjoy political freedom ; though the form of it was scarcely yet determined. This development was all the more remarkable, because during the same period nearly all the European States were having the chains of despotic government fixed upon them, and the predominant political thought of the age held that it was only by means of absolute monarchy that order could be maintained and progress secured. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the island peoples was to show that this was not so.

While the islands were thus engaged, in Europe, and especially in Central Europe, fierce wars were being waged, which were to have the effect of changing the aspect of the civilised world. But in these struggles the islands took very little part ; and when at length they did begin, in the next period, to play once more a great part in European politics, they were at first a little bewildered by the changed aspect of affairs.

CHAPTER I

EUROPE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

§ 1. *Problems of Peace and War.*

No less than the islands, Europe was entering upon a new age at the beginning of the seventeenth century.¹ When the century opened she was weary of religious wars, and the fierce conflicts of the last half century seemed to have decided the fate of the rival religions over the greater part of the Continent. Spain and Italy were definitely Roman Catholic; indeed, the ascendancy of the Roman faith had not been challenged in either country. On the other hand, Denmark (with which went Norway) and Sweden were as definitely Protestant. In France the desperate wars of religion, after forty years of fighting, had failed to destroy the Huguenots. Though Henry of Navarre had become a Catholic (1593) to gain the crown and pacify the land, and though France was officially a Catholic country, the Protestants were given, by the Edict of Nantes (1598), the right to follow their own faith under certain limitations, and they received the control over certain fortified towns as a safeguard. This was a real, though incomplete, experiment in religious toleration. In the Netherlands the United Provinces of the North (corresponding to the modern kingdom of Holland) had securely established their independence as a Protestant State, though Spain refused to recognise the fact till 1648; and they were at the opening of the most glorious period in their history, a period of immense commercial activity and prosperity, and of almost equally valuable literary and artistic achievement. But the southern provinces of the Netherlands (corresponding to modern Belgium)—once the centres of great industries and of vigorous trade—had remained loyal to Catholicism, and were still under the blighting rule of Spain, which made it impossible for them to revive their ancient glories.

Only in Central Europe was the religious conflict still

¹ For the state of Europe at this period see the map, Atlas, Plate 8.

undetermined. Germany and the neighbouring Austrian lands were still in the condition in which they had been left by Charles v., divided, under the nominal headship of the Emperor, into more than three hundred little States, whose petty sovereigns, in accordance with the principle *cujus regio ejus religio*, had the right to determine the faith of their subjects. At the beginning of the century the Protestants had a considerable numerical ascendancy in the greater part of Germany; even in the lands of the Habsburgs—Austria, Bohemia, and what the Turks had left of Hungary—the Protestants were very numerous, especially in Bohemia. But the Protestant party in Germany was weakened by its division into two sections, Lutherans and Calvinists, who were very jealous of one another; and also by the fact that none of the numerous Protestant princes possessed any considerable military power. The head of the Lutheran party was the Elector of Saxony; the head of the Calvinist party, who organised themselves into a separate Union in 1608, was the Elector Palatine of the Rhine. On the other hand, the Catholics were showing a new vigour and a tendency to aggressiveness. One of the Catholic princes, the Duke of Bavaria, was building up an efficient army, and he had brought the minor Catholic powers under his leadership in the Catholic League (1607).

If it came to war between the two religions in Germany, as seemed every year more likely, the Catholics could count upon the strong support of the House of Habsburg, the two branches of which (in Spain and Austria) both counted among the greatest powers of Europe. The Spanish branch had indeed lost greatly in prestige since its crushing defeats by England and the United Provinces. But Spain had lost no territory in the long fight except the Northern Netherlands; territorially she was still by far the greatest State in Europe, and she still possessed the wealth of the Indies. Public opinion in Europe, and also in England, had not realised the internal weakness which was soon to reduce Spain to the level of a third-rate power, and regarded her with fear. The Austrian branch of the Habsburgs was weaker, owing to the divisions which existed in its dominions. But if these could be overcome, Austria with its wide lands and warlike subjects would be a very formidable power.

In any case the might of the Habsburgs would surely be sufficient to ensure victory for the Catholic princes of Germany against the divided forces of the Protestants, unless the Protestant States of Europe came to their aid.

And if that were to happen, the result would be a general European war such as had never yet been seen. Extremists on both sides were eager that the final conflict should be brought about, and hoped for a crushing victory for their own side. Among the Puritans in England there were many who would have rejoiced to see their country take what they considered to be its proper place, as the leader of the Protestant cause. But they did not want to take part in a war on the Continent if it could be avoided; a vigorous attack on Spain by sea was what most of them longed for. They were, in truth, rather ignorant of the European situation, and had very little sense of the horror of a universal war such as might easily come about, and nearly did come about.

There were some wise men in Europe who foresaw this danger and wished to avoid it; and who believed that peace might be maintained if only the policy of nations ceased to be guided by religious rivalries. One of these was King Henry IV. of France,¹ the great king who had ended the French wars of religion, and who knew from bitter experience the horrors of religious wars, and the harm they did to religion. In his view the great danger to Europe was to be found in the threatening power of the Habsburgs. He exaggerated the danger, like other people; but it was natural for a Frenchman to exaggerate it, since France was almost surrounded by Habsburg lands, which included some really French territory.² Henry's aim was, disregarding religious differences, to combine under his own leadership the forces of resistance to the Habsburgs; if war should follow, he hoped to strengthen the position of France by acquiring the Habsburg territories on his own borders. This became the traditional policy of France for a century and a half to come. Henry's great minister Sully has told us in his memoirs, written after his retirement, that his master had entertained a yet more ambitious project: no less than the creation of a sort of European federation or League of Nations for the maintenance of peace, once the Habsburg danger had been removed. It is more than doubtful whether Henry ever entertained such an idea; but it is a sign of growing dissatisfaction with the endless wars from which Europe suffered that a responsible statesman, even in retirement, should recommend such an idea.

Another advocate of peace was James I. and VI., the new

¹ There is a life of Henry IV., by P. F. Willert (*Heroes of the Nations*).

² See the map, Atlas, Plate 9.

ruler of the British Islands, who had a much wider acquaintance with European politics than most of his subjects. His notion was that peace might be maintained by the co-operation of England, the leading Protestant power, with Spain, the leading Catholic power. To that end he did his best to make friends with Spain. As soon as possible after his succession he closed the Elizabethan war with Spain by a rather unsatisfactory treaty (1604), which left unmentioned the chief subject of controversy, the right of trade in the Indies. Then he tried to arrange a marriage between his heir and a Spanish princess—the normal mode at that time of making friendship between States. This will-o'-the-wisp James pursued throughout the greater part of his reign. But the Spaniards never began to understand his motives. At first they thought he was going to turn Catholic: then they found it useful to humour the pedantic king, as a means of keeping England quiet. Nor did James' subjects sympathise with his aims. They regarded him as a traitor to the Protestant cause; the idea of a Spanish marriage was abhorrent to them, and contributed in no small degree to alienate the king from his Parliament. They had more sympathy when, in 1613, James married his daughter to the Elector Palatine, the leading Calvinist prince in Germany, and the head of the aggressive Protestant party in that country. But they could not see that the two marriage projects were part of the same policy—the policy of keeping the peace between the rival religions.

The friends of European peace were in a small minority at that date, and James I. was in this respect ahead of his time. Yet these years saw the beginning of a very fruitful development, which had as its aim the restriction and regulation of the disastrous inter-state wars with which European history had been fuller than ever since the downfall of the mediæval idea that the whole civilised world ought to obey common laws. International law now came to birth. Its real origin may be attributed to the great Dutch lawyer and philosopher, Grotius, whose book *de Jure Belli et Pacis* was published in 1625. The basis of Grotius' treatise was the belief that there must be, and indeed was, a common body of rules which all States ought to obey in their relations with one another. The surprising thing is that the rules which Grotius worked out, and which were expanded and developed in a series of later treatises, were generally accepted throughout Europe, were referred

to as binding in a number of European treaties, beginning with the great treaties of Westphalia in 1648, and were on the whole tolerably well observed during the next two centuries. International law, as developed by Grotius and his successors, did not try to prevent war; it aimed at regulating it, and at defining the rights and duties of States in relation to one another, whether in war or peace. But it was the beginning of an advance towards international co-operation.

The idea of international co-operation for the maintenance of peace was one of the fruitful political ideas of this period; but it was only coming to birth, and exercised little influence on the course of events. Another idea, far more characteristic of the period, and far more potent in its influence, was the idea of the value and excellence of absolute monarchy as a safeguard of society and as the only sure means of progress. This was a natural idea in such a country as France, just released from a long period of misery, from which a strong central government might have saved it. Almost everywhere, therefore, and in France most of all, the traditional or customary restraints upon the power of rulers were being removed. The mediæval Estates, for example, lost such power as they still retained: the last meeting of the States General before the French Revolution was in this period. This was not the result merely of the ambition of kings, though that helped. It was in accord with the predominant political theories of the time. There had been a great deal of political theorising in the sixteenth century, and some of it had been favourable to popular or even democratic ideas. But the predominant doctrines even then, and still more in the new age, favoured absolute monarchy. When the power of monarchs was restricted, anarchy and tumult seemed to result; when it was unrestricted, peace and order reigned. The power of monarchy seemed to be the divine ordinance for the maintenance of good order in States; and these ideas gave support to the semi-religious doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings which is characteristic of the age.

It may be noted that the Reformation had greatly encouraged this doctrine; for some substitute had to be found for the discredited authority of Pope and Emperor. Luther had preached the supreme power or duty of princes to regulate even the consciences of their subjects; and kings who, like the Tudors in England, made themselves the popes of their own realm, were apt to claim that they, equally with

the Pope, were answerable to God alone. Naturally kings welcomed a theory so pleasing to themselves, and so much in accord with the political tendencies of the age. It is not too much to say that the theory of Divine Right was everywhere widely accepted, save in the Netherlands and in England; and even in England there were many, besides the king himself, who quite honestly believed in it. For nearly two centuries to come the prevailing view, even among philosophers, was that absolute monarchy was the best safeguard for the existence of social order; and the civil war which followed the English repudiation of this view seemed to confirm it.

§ 2. *The Thirty Years' War.*

If Henry IV. of France had lived, he might have staved off the threatened religious war in Germany, or turned it into a purely political struggle between the house of Habsburg and a confederation headed by France. But he was assassinated by a Catholic fanatic in 1610; and therefore the war became inevitable, for all James I.'s attempts to maintain peace by making friendship with Spain were wholly futile. In 1618 it at last broke out; a terrible and desolating war, which raged for thirty years. It did not become a universal war; but it came very near to it, since nearly every European State was at one time or another drawn into it; and at its close there had to be made the first of a series of general European settlements, the latest of which belongs to our own days.

The war began with a revolt of the Bohemians or Czechs against the rule of the Habsburgs. Bohemia¹ had had a great history as a distinct nation during the Middle Ages, especially in the fifteenth century, when, under the reformer Hus, she had successfully defied Catholic Europe. The Czechs had never admitted without question the claim of the Habsburgs to rule Bohemia, a claim which came from one of the lucky marriages for which that family was famous; and when they were invited to recognise as the inheritor of the throne a fanatical Catholic, Ferdinand of Styria, they rebelled, and, in the hope of getting help from the German Protestants, invited Frederick the Elector Palatine to accept the throne. The elector was James I.'s son-in-law, and hoped for English aid. He asked James' advice,

¹ There is a short history of Bohemia, by Count Lutzow, in *Everyman's Library*.

but accepted the throne before the advice could be given him. James had no sympathy with what seemed to him a usurpation, and a deliberate precipitation of the dreaded war; and in any case England, having no army, could give no help in Bohemia. The Lutheran princes of Germany also stood aloof. The Habsburgs, aided by the German Catholic princes, quickly broke the back of the Bohemian resistance at the battle of the White Mountain (1620) and after driving out 'the winter king' (as Frederick was called, from the brevity of his reign) proceeded, by fierce persecution, to destroy Protestantism, and so far as possible the national spirit, in Bohemia the unhappy country did not begin to revive till the nineteenth century, or recover its freedom till the Great War. So ended the first, or Bohemian, stage of the war.

The Austrians and the German Catholics next proceeded to overrun the original dominions of Frederick¹ and the other Calvinist princes of South Germany, and in this easy task they had the aid of a Spanish army, which marched down the Rhine from the Netherlands. This showed how vain were James' hopes from Spain. He redoubled his futile endeavours to get Spain to play the part of a mediator. His son Charles, the destined bridegroom, and his favourite Buckingham, even went off on a wild goose chase to Madrid to try to settle the marriage alliance. But the only result was that friendly relations with Spain were broken, and a new war between England and Spain broke out in 1624. Its only important event was an ill-managed attempt to seize Cadiz (1625), which led to humiliating failure. James made no attempt to save his son-in-law, the elector, though a few English volunteers went to share in his ruin, and Frederick and his English wife, Elizabeth, driven from their capital at Heidelberg, became wanderers for the rest of their lives. Their sons, Princes Rupert and Maurice, eventually came to England, where Rupert played a very important part in the Civil War and in the reign of Charles II.

The victory over Frederick and the South German Protestants was a great triumph for the Catholic party. They saw before them the chance of a complete overthrow of German Protestantism. The only chance of saving the situation seemed to be that England, and if possible France also, should intervene, either directly, or by persuading one or more of the northern powers to invade Germany, and providing them with the means of doing so.

¹ See the map of Germany, Atlas, Plate 23 (b)

Fortunately a great statesman, Cardinal Richelieu,¹ had come into power in France. He was to be the chief builder of the strength of the French monarchy, and the continuator of the policy of Henry IV. : Cardinal though he was, he cared more to increase French power by checking the House of Habsburg than to win a possible victory for Catholicism. On the English side James had practically abandoned the control of foreign affairs to Buckingham and Prince Charles, who soon succeeded to the throne (1625). Charles and Buckingham, anxious to regain the Palatinate, to save German Protestantism, and to win popularity in England, made an alliance with France, which was cemented by the marriage of Charles to the French Princess Henrietta Maria. But this was only part of a big combination, which was to include the Dutch, Venice and Denmark. Denmark undertook to send an army into Germany to the aid of the Protestants, the cost of which was to be partly paid by English subsidies; and an English army was also to be sent, either through the Netherlands or through France.

It was a great combination, and, if it had been fully carried into effect, would have saved the situation. But one great difficulty was that Charles had no money wherewith to fulfil his promises, because his Parliament, despite their zeal for the Protestant cause, would not vote him any. A scratch army—the levying and billeting of which caused endless difficulties in England—was indeed sent across, but it melted away through sickness and bad organisation without achieving anything. The King of Denmark never received a penny of his promised subsidies. His army was crushingly defeated at Lutter (1626); and North Germany as well as South now lay at the feet of the Habsburgs.

France had done little, mainly because an outbreak among the nobles of the Huguenot party distracted Richelieu's efforts. Charles had the folly to promise the loan of ships to help the French in reducing the Protestant fortress of La Rochelle, which inevitably aroused furious indignation among the Puritans at home, and a mutiny in the fleet. Before long Charles had quarrelled with Richelieu, and a foolish war with France was added to the war with Spain (1627). Its only important event was a futile and disastrous expedition, led by the Duke of Buckingham, against the island of Ré in the Bay of Biscay. The object

¹ There is a life of Richelieu, by Sir R. Lodge (*Foreign Statesmen*).

of this folly was to regain popularity in England; its result was to render impossible any effective intervention in Germany by either England or France. After this disgraceful series of blunders and betrayals, Charles made no further attempt to take part in the war. He was deep in debt; he had quarrelled fatally with Parliament, and could not get any money from that source; he had resolved to govern without Parliament, and this involved rigid economy and the avoidance of foreign adventures. Thus the parliamentary strife in England, which will be the theme of later chapters, had its effect upon the European war; the Protestant cause in Germany was left in the lurch; England was humiliated by the reckless levity of its king's promises, and his total failure to perform them; and another ground of quarrel was given to the parliamentary opposition.

The remainder of the Thirty Years' War did not directly affect the history of the islands; but its influence in the history of Europe was so great that a summary of it, however bald, must be attempted.

The result of the utter defeat of the Danish intervention was to place the whole of Germany at the disposal of the Catholic party. The Lutheran princes were helpless. The Catholics demanded the restoration of all the Church lands which had been taken over by the Protestants during the previous seventy years (1629). The Habsburg Emperor Ferdinand saw within his grasp a dictatorship of Germany, such as even Charles v. had never enjoyed. The great adventurer, Wallenstein, who had raised an army of mercenaries, living by plunder, to fight on the Catholic side, held even the Baltic shores. But this brought in the Swedish king, Gustavus Adolphus,¹ the greatest soldier of his age. He did not want to see the Swedish power on the Baltic, which he was building up, threatened by so dangerous a rival; and he was also a devoted Protestant. Backed by French subsidies, and helped by the fear of the Habsburgs which French diplomatists sowed even among the Catholic princes, he invaded Germany (1630), and in a brilliant campaign broke for a time the power of the Catholics at the battles of Breitenfeld (1631) and Lützen (1632). Unfortunately he lost his life in the second of these battles. But he had saved Northern Germany for Protestantism, and destroyed the chance of German unity under the

¹ There is a life of Gustavus Adolphus by C. R. L. Fletcher (*Heroes of the Nations*).

Habsburg crown. The relative extension of Protestantism and Romanism in Germany remains much as he left it; and, so far as the original cause of quarrel was concerned, the war might now have ended.

It lasted, however, for another sixteen years. In this last and longest phase of the miserable war, unhappy Germany became the battle-ground of ambitious powers, especially Sweden and France (which entered the struggle in 1633), and of soldiers of fortune, who led armies which maintained themselves wholly by plunder. The serious feature of this period of the war was that France, at last freed (for a time) from troubles at home by the defeat of the Huguenot rebels, seized the opportunity to increase her power at the expense both of Germany and of the Spanish dominions. Even when the war in Germany ended, in 1648,¹ the war between France and Spain still went on for another eleven years (1659), encouraged by a desolating civil strife which had broken out in France.

The result of this appalling war, the ugliest and the most brutal that Europe had yet seen, was to bring about the almost total ruin of Germany. She had been a populous and industrious country; her traders had been among the most prosperous in Europe. Now she had lost half her population, and the ravages of war had destroyed most of her wealth. Disunited before, her disunion was made final and apparently hopeless, because under the treaty of Westphalia (1648) it was placed under the guardianship of Europe. Her nominal emperors, of the Habsburg House, henceforward made no effort to turn their authority into a reality, but confined themselves to the extension of their own dominions in the south-east; and though there were still imperial courts and councils, and (on paper) an imperial army, they counted for nothing. Happier foreign countries, united while she was divided, held blocks of her territory: France had acquired most of Alsace, and had a strong footing in Lorraine, both parts of the old German kingdom; Sweden held Pomerania and controlled the mouth of the Elbe. Among her three hundred petty States there were only two or three which counted for anything in European affairs. One of these, the electorate of Brandenburg, later to become the kingdom of Prussia, was rising into prominence, and made some gains as a result of the war;² but no one could foretell as yet the great part it was in

¹ See the map of Europe at the peace of Westphalia, Atlas, Plate 9.

² See the map of the growth of Prussia, Atlas, Plate 24 (a).

future to play. As a factor in the life of Europe and of Western civilisation, Germany was almost blotted out of the map. Spain, too, had manifestly sunk to the second rank of powers, though she still retained nearly all her territories. But two powers had emerged as of the first rank. One of these was Sweden, which entered upon a brief period of military splendour, too exacting for her resources. The other was France, which, though her greatness was momentarily obscured by civil strife in 1648, had manifestly become the greatest power in Europe, and was about to enter upon one of the most magnificent periods in her wonderful history.

While these ugly but highly important events were taking place in Europe, the islands were too much concerned with their own affairs to pay any serious regard to them, because they were engrossed first in religious and political controversy, and then in civil wars.

Yet in several ways the Thirty Years' War directly affected the fortunes of the islands. In the first place, while the war raged none of the European powers was in a position to intervene in the domestic strife of England. In the second place, many Englishmen and many Scots, like Dugald Dalgetty in Scott's *Legend of Montrose*, enlisted as mercenaries or volunteers in the armies of Gustavus, Wallenstein, and other leaders in the long war. They came back, having learnt the art of war in the most extensive practical school of it that Europe had yet seen, to place their trained skill at the service of one side or the other in the Civil Wars. In the third place, with the exception of the Dutch, the European States, and more especially France, were too much engrossed by the struggle to pay much attention to the non-European world. The quiet growth of the English colonies in this period owes a good deal to that. Certainly it was due to the Thirty Years' War that there was no German competition, either at this time or for many generations afterwards, in colonisation and oversea trade.

[A lively general sketch of European history in this period is to be found in Wakeman's *Ascendancy of France*, see also Abbott's *Expansion of Europe* Gardiner's *Thirty Years' War* (Epochs of Modern History) is an admirable short sketch; the standard book on the subject is Gindely's *Thirty Years' War* (Eng trans.) Lord Acton has a lecture on the Thirty Years' War in his *Lectures on Modern History*. For international law and movements towards peace, Muir's *Nationalism and Internationalism*, for the ideas of absolute monarchy, J. N. Figgis' *Divine Right of Kings*]

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST COLONIES, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF TRADE WITH INDIA

§ 1. *International Rivalry in Oversea Trade.*

DURING the first half of the seventeenth century a movement began which was in the long run to prove far more important to Europe and to the world than the Thirty Years' War: the sea-board peoples of Northern Europe, taking advantage of the downfall of the Spanish-Portuguese monopoly and of the opening of the seas, began to press forth into the non-European world, to throw round the globe the tentacles of their trade and influence, and to plant in empty lands new centres of their civilisation.¹ The primary motives of these enterprises were economic. The northern nations desired to tap the sources of the wealth of Spain and Portugal. They desired to get direct access to the luxuries of the tropics, many of which, like the spices with which winter stores of food were made palatable, had practically become necessities, while others, like sugar and tobacco, were rapidly coming to take the same rank. They also desired a more abundant supply of some non-tropical products which they themselves scarcely supplied in sufficient abundance—fish, for example, or timber, or tar. But there were other motives besides these: the desire to find new homes for their surplus population was one, though not yet a very powerful one; the more vulgar desire merely to acquire territory also counted; and there had to be an outlet for the adventurous spirit which had been cultivated by the long strife of the previous age. Add to this that religious controversy drove refugees abroad, and the wide range and varied character of the movement which now began becomes intelligible.

Though the enterprises of the English oversea were in the long run to prove the most important, they by no means stood alone, nor were they the most remarkable, in this

¹ There is a general map of European settlement during this period, Atlas, Plate 48.

period. The peoples who played the leading parts in this movement were, in the order of their importance, first the Dutch, next the English, next, after a considerable interval, the French, the parts played by the Danes and Swedes were relatively insignificant. Our primary concern is with the English achievement, but it is important to see it in its relation with the rest, partly because this brings out its distinctive character, which was to be of extreme importance for the future, and partly because many even of the lands explored or settled by other nations were ultimately to become members of the British Commonwealth.

It is at first sight difficult to understand why the Dutch, a small and far from rich nation which had been passing through an exhausting ordeal, should have attained the remarkable pre-eminence which fell to it during this period in oversea trade and colonisation. One important reason was that they were still at war with Spain till 1648, while England made peace in 1604. The English government, bent upon cultivating Spanish friendship, could not allow direct attacks upon Spanish or Portuguese possessions, much as its subjects wanted to make them. The Dutch government, on the other hand, aimed at striking every possible blow at their enemy. The two great trading companies which controlled Dutch enterprise during this period, the Company of the East Indies and the Company of the West Indies, were largely designed for this end, and practically divided the whole field of operations between them. They were national organisations, constantly assisted and supported by the State, and they aimed at organising all private effort in these fields towards a common end. The corresponding English companies were much more numerous, much weaker and more divided in their aims, and they never had such a national character: they were regulated and restrained, rather than stimulated and helped, by government. Moreover to the Dutch the development of national wealth and strength by foreign trade was almost the supreme national interest, whereas the English were throughout this period, as we shall see, mainly concerned with religious and political problems, and the French were distracted by internal discords, and by their growing ambitions of ascendancy in Europe.

All the nations which took part in this great movement proceeded in much the same manner. They did not place the whole of their enterprises under government control, as Spain and Portugal had done with unhappy results.

They organised chartered companies, in which groups of private merchants were linked together under State supervision and encouraged by the concession of a monopoly of the trade between their own country and the lands covered by their charters. These companies were at first not joint-stock companies in the modern sense: they had only a comparatively small common fund, with which trading stations and forts were maintained, while their members invested separately in a single voyage, or series of voyages. But the Dutch companies were almost from the first organised on so big a scale, and so closely in relation with their government, that they can scarcely be called private enterprises; while the French companies were so unsuccessful in their first stage that government soon had to take them under its control, and they never did much until in the second half of the century they were almost turned into government departments. The English companies, on the other hand—not only the greatest, the East India Company, which was founded by Elizabeth in 1600, but the two Virginia Companies of 1606, and a whole series of others—were from the first genuine private organisations, really run by the merchants who composed them, in spite of the supervision exercised over them by government. They seemed to suffer at first by the lack of government help. In the long run it was the secret of their success. Organised and co-operative private effort built up English foreign trade, and founded the English colonies, almost without government assistance; and for that reason the English experiments were far more varied, and far less tied up by regulations, than those of the other countries.

§ 2. *European Enterprises in the East: the East India Company.*

The field towards which trading enterprise first and most eagerly turned was the Far East, where the Portuguese had hitherto had everything to themselves. There were two main branches of the Eastern trade: the trade with the continent of India, and the trade with the Malay Archipelago and especially the rich little Spice Islands at its heart;¹ other branches of Eastern trade—with Persia, and with Japan and China—were of quite minor importance. Of the two, the Spice Island trade was much the more lucrative. It yielded profits sometimes amounting to

¹ See the map, Atlas, Plate 49.

1200 ~~per cent.~~ on a single voyage ; and as there were many island chiefs in a backward state of civilisation whom the Portuguese had partially conquered, it was possible here, as it was not in India, to enforce commercial monopoly by political control.

Into this field the Dutch and the English at first entered as comrades in arms, but this did not last long. The Dutch had great advantages. In the first place, they were free, as after 1604 the English were not, to attack the Portuguese directly ; in the second place they had much larger funds, and could raise armies, build factories, and establish and garrison forts. Naturally they did not see why the English should take advantage of their expenditure, and the early partnership quickly passed into almost open hostility. James I. tried to patch up an agreement in 1619, but it was useless. Nicholas Courthope long held out gallantly in the island of Pulaoon, which the English claimed. But the Dutch were too powerful. In 1623 they arrested a small group of English traders in the island of Amboyna (which was absolutely in Dutch control) on a baseless charge of conspiracy, tortured them to exact confessions, and put twelve out of eighteen of them to death. This episode, which was known as the Massacre of Amboyna, practically ended British trade in the Spice Islands, where (and in most of the Malay Archipelago) the Dutch remained politically as well as commercially supreme, as they still do to this day. But coming as the climax of a long rivalry in which the English had had much the worst, and kept fresh by a continuance of this rivalry, it ended the comradeship of the two enemies of Spain, and prepared the way for the Anglo-Dutch wars of the middle of the century.

The Dutch, left supreme in the Far East, developed their opportunities with astonishing energy and success. They practically controlled the trade with Japan. They explored the waters south of the Malay Peninsula, and between 1605 and 1650 their great explorers (Tasman, 1642-4, above all) ¹ discovered the continent of Australia and the islands which still bear the Dutch name of New Zealand. They did not settle in these lands, well fitted as they were for European settlers, because it was not colonisation but trade which was their object. Later in the century (1651) they made a settlement at the Cape of Good Hope, which was to have a great future. But they did not intend it to be a colony, only a post at which ships could refit and be

¹ See the map of his explorations, Atlas, Plate 48.

supplied with fresh vegetables on the way to India. For that reason it remained under the control of the Dutch East India Company, which denied all rights of self-government to the settlers.

Driven from the Spice Islands, the English East India Company had to devote itself to the continent of India, to which, indeed, several of its earlier voyages had been sent, and where it already had several factories at the time of the Massacre of Amboyna. The Dutch were serious rivals here also; and in the island of Ceylon the Dutch gradually established an almost complete monopoly. But on the mainland they never drove out the English: indeed all the European trading nations had their factories in India, and none of them had yet begun to dream of political power in that land.

When the Portuguese first came to India a century earlier they had found it in a condition of disorganisation, and this had enabled them to conquer and possess areas on its coast. But since then a great power, highly organised and civilised, had established its direct authority over the whole of Northern India, though Southern India was still divided between several smaller States.¹ This power was the Mogul Empire. Set up by Baber, an invader from the north-west in the time of Henry VIII., it had been consolidated and had reached its highest power under the great and wise Akbar, who was ruling the whole plain of the Ganges and the Indus from Agra in the time of Queen Elizabeth. The reigns of his successors, Jehangir and Shah Jehan, cover the period with which we are now concerned; and under these princes the splendour of the Mogul power, especially in art and architecture, reached its acme. Shah Jehan, contemporary with Charles I., was building, in the Taj Mahal and the Pearl Mosque at Agra, and in the lovely marble palaces of Delhi, some of the noblest and most beautiful buildings in the world. In the presence of a power of this kind the European adventurers had to behave themselves. James I. sent an ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, to the court of Jehangir in 1615, to ask with all due courtesy that trading privileges should be granted to the English. The Great Mogul replied at first that the Portuguese controlled the European trade; as India had no sea-power, he evidently did not want to meddle. But when the Portuguese failed to drive away the persistent English interlopers, the Mogul readily allowed the new-comers to

¹ See the map of India in this period, Atlas, Plate 59 (a).

establish factories—which, of course, in carrying on their trade had to show due respect to the laws and authorities of the country.

Thus the English had to overcome Portuguese opposition before they could trade freely with India. Though they were not allowed to attack the Portuguese (since peace had been made in 1604), they did not recognise the right of the Portuguese to exclude them, and were ready to defend themselves when attacked. The struggle with the Portuguese was at its height during the ten years before 1622, when the struggle with the Dutch farther east was also raging; after that the Portuguese left the English alone, and the two nations even co-operated against the Dutch. In 1612 Captain Thomas Best, with only two trading ships of the East India Company, and in 1614 Captain Nicholas Downton, with only four ships, had to resist fierce attacks by overwhelming Portuguese naval forces, off the town of Surat—the main port on the West Coast for the trade of Northern India, from which the Portuguese were determined to exclude them. In both cases they won resounding and amazing victories, which so raised the prestige of the English, and so usefully backed up the solicitations of Sir Thomas Roe, that in the year 1616 the East India Company was allowed to open a 'factory' at Surat. English prestige was still further raised when, at the request of the local sultan, the English traders in 1622 drove the Portuguese out of Ormuz, a strong place at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, which they had held since the time of Albuquerque.

The factory at Surat, the first secure English foothold on the coast of India, was only a hired house: a quadrangle with a central courtyard and a surrounding compound or garden. In its upper story the President and his assistants lived, while the lower was used as a warehouse, where goods for export to England were slowly accumulated till the ships arrived, and the cargoes they brought were sold by auction to Indian merchants. Surat long remained the principal centre of English trade in India. But others were established during this period. In 1632, after some years of sharp rivalry with the Dutch, a factory was started at Masulipatam, on the east coast. In the next year a modest beginning was made at the mouth of the Hooghly river. This was the beginning of the English connexion with Bengal; and in 1650 a more permanent factory was planted higher up the river, at the town of Hooghly. Meanwhile

in 1639 the Company had been permitted by a local raja to buy an area of land on the south-east coast, and to erect upon it not only a factory but a fort. It was called Fort St. George; and it was to grow into the city of Madras. Thus the English were fairly planted, though only as modest traders, at the three points from which their influence was to extend over India—the west coast, Madras and Bengal.

The agents whom the Company sent out to manage these factories, and the dependent collecting stations up country, were paid almost nominal salaries—far too low to support any Englishman so far from home. This was partly because the Company's resources were small. But there was a better reason. The agents were appointed on the understanding that they would supplement their salaries by carrying on local trade on their own account; they had plenty of time to do so during the long intervals between the visits of the ships. When these traders obtained political power, this practice was to have disastrous results. But so long as they were under the control of strong Indian governments, it did no harm to anybody. Indeed, it was (in appearance at any rate) advantageous to everybody concerned. It encouraged private enterprise, and enlisted it in the service of a common aim. Here again, individual enterprise is the distinctive English note; with its virtues, and also its defects. Such were the modest beginnings of the momentous connexion between the islands of the west and the ancient realm of India. The Company suffered some set-backs, and was sometimes in low water, during the first fifty years of its existence. But during all the period of parliamentary conflict in England the Indian trade was steadily going on, and steadily enriching the country. It was enriching India also; for the interchange of goods is beneficial to both sides.

§ 3. *Colonising Activities in the West: Canada, Virginia and New England.*

In the West, as well as in the East, the supremacy of the Dutch seemed during this period to be overwhelming. Their powerful and strongly supported Company of the West Indies (founded 1621) controlled all the Dutch activities in the North and South Atlantic.¹ They founded trading settlements in Guiana; they occupied, among other islands, Curaçoa, from which a lucrative smuggling

¹ See the maps, Atlas, Plates 53 and 58 (a).

trade could be carried on with the Spanish Main, they brought slaves from West Africa, then ships dominated all these waters, carrying the greater part of the trade even of the English and French settlements. Above all they made a vigorous attack upon the rich Portuguese territory in Brazil, a large part of which they held for thirty years (1624-54). But their aim was always trade, not settlement. Though they established in 1624-6, under the name of the New Netherlands,¹ a plantation at the mouth of the Hudson—the best centre for trade on the east coast of North America, as the subsequent growth of New York has shown—its main purpose was to carry on a fur trade with the Red Indians. The settlers were for long few in number, and (like those of Cape Colony), they were never allowed the rights of self-government.

Meanwhile the French and the English were engaged upon enterprises in North America which, though they were at the moment far less dazzling and lucrative than those of the Dutch, were to lead to far greater results.

The first object of the ambition of both peoples was the lucrative traffic of the West Indies and the Spanish Main.² Here the wild and lawless traditions of the previous age naturally had a great influence, and much of the activity of the French and English, as also of many Dutchmen, was devoted to mere piracy. For two centuries to come West Indian waters were haunted by pirates. They made their headquarters upon the numerous islands which the Spaniards had left unoccupied, notably the island of Tortuga, which commanded one of the passages followed by ships coming from Central America to Europe. The pirates were known as 'buccaneers,' from the French *boucanes*, the wood-fires at which they dried their stores of meat or as 'freebooters,' from the Dutch *vliebooten*, the flying boats which were the terror of peaceful navigators.

But alongside of piracy went settlement, especially among the English, in the little islands which the Spaniards had neglected. The French harmoniously divided the little island of St Christopher with their English comrades in 1628, and occupied the fine islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe (1635), but the great period of French activity in the West Indies did not come till the next age. The English threw themselves with far greater zeal into the

¹ See the map, Atlas, Plate 54 (c)

² See the map, Atlas, Plate 53 (a) and (b).

planting of West Indian Islands, especially when they found that these lands could produce tobacco, sugar and cotton, which fetched very high prices at home. Government, which, though it desired peace with Spain, never recognised the right of the Spaniards to exclude Englishmen from unoccupied lands, supported this movement by granting charters to a number of small companies founded for the purpose of island plantations. The most important of the English islands in this period was Barbados (settled in 1624), which almost from the outset enjoyed great prosperity. But there were also settlements in the little Leeward Islands—at St. Christopher (1623), Nevis (1628), Barbuda (1628), Antigua (1632) and Montserrat (1632); there was a plantation in Honduras (1638); and there were unsuccessful attempts to plant settlements on the coast of South America. It was one of these attempts, organised by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1617, and aimed mainly at the acquisition of the legendary gold mines of Eldorado, which led to the execution of that survivor of the Elizabethan age.

In the English West Indian settlements there was one remarkable feature which distinguished them from the settlements of all other nations. The settlers brought out with them the habits of local self-government, ingrained in them by centuries of practice at home; and they seem almost everywhere to have set up elected bodies to share in the management of local affairs. We do not know when a representative body was first set up in Barbados, but in 1652 the Barbadians stated that government by a governor, a council and an assembly was 'the ancient and usual custom here'; and there are many other instances of the same thing. The note of local self-government was a feature of the English settlements from the outset, even in the slave-worked West India Islands, which lived in constant danger of Spanish attacks.

But it was on the mainland of North America that the men of this age did the greatest work—the work that was to lead to greatest results.¹ Here the main part was played by the English and the French, who entered at almost exactly the same moment upon the task of planting colonies in these almost empty lands. The work of both is of equal concern to us; for while the English settlements were to fix the main characteristics of English colonisation, and were ultimately to develop into the mighty American republic, the French settlements were, after long conflicts,

¹ See the map of the colonisation of North America, Atlas, Plate 54.

to pass under British rule, and to become part of the British Commonwealth.

Ever since the daring explorations of Cartier (1534-6), who had discovered the wide estuary of the St. Lawrence, and, pursuing it in the hope that he had found the north-west passage, had pushed his way as far as Montreal and given the name of Canada¹ to the country which he had discovered, the French had regarded this land as peculiarly theirs. They had made several unsuccessful attempts to plant settlements in it. But in 1603 an expedition, which included the great explorer Samuel Champlain, renewed Cartier's discoveries, and in the next year a settlement was made at Port Royal, in Acadia (Nova Scotia). In 1608 Champlain returned with yet another expedition, and planted a trading-post on the high rocky bluff overlooking the St. Lawrence at Quebec.

Champlain's work was mainly that of mapping out the country.² In 1609 he explored, to the south, the beautiful lake which still bears his name: but this voyage brought him into conflict with the fierce Indian tribes of the Iroquois, who inhabited the northern part of what is now the State of New York. They were henceforth to be the relentless enemies of the French. In 1613-15 Champlain made his way up the Ottawa, through trackless forests inhabited only by scattered Indian tribes, then by Lake Nipissing to Lake Huron, and across to the eastern end of Lake Ontario. Here he again came into conflict with the Iroquois, whose homelands he had now reached. This was one of the most gallant feats of exploration in the early history of North America, far surpassing any similar achievement of the English; and it struck at the outset the note of romantic daring which was to mark the whole history of French Canada.

Though a valuable trade in furs sprang up from the first, there were for a long time few French settlers in this uninviting land of forests and fierce savages. A new company, founded in 1627 under royal patronage, tried to stimulate emigration. But there was only a thin fringe of settlements along the shore of the river near Quebec: little *seigneuries*, where emigrant gentlemen maintained fortified stockades for the protection of their handful of cultivating

¹ Canada comes from Kannata, the Indian word for a collection of huts, which was given to Cartier as the name of a place where he landed; he supposed it to be the name of the country.

² See the map, Atlas, Plate 54.

tenants. The few settlers devoted themselves rather to the adventurous and profitable enterprises of trapping fur-bearing animals in the forests and trading with the Indians, than to cultivation. The noblest exploits of the period were those of the Jesuit missionaries, who went far afield among the wild savages, and settled themselves down to convert them to Christianity: they had a great success among the comparatively peaceful Huron tribe, on the eastern shores of the lake of that name.

But the infant colony had to face extreme difficulties. In the first place it was threatened by the relentless enmity of the Iroquois, the best organised and the most warlike of the Indian tribes, who had made themselves more terrible by learning the use of fire-arms, which they purchased from the Dutch traders on the Hudson. The Iroquois exterminated the friendly Hurons, and murdered several of the missionaries with hideous tortures which were heroically endured. They mastered all the tribes in the neighbourhood of the infant colony. They raided the settlement year after year, and every settler in French Canada lived in constant terror of the Iroquois war-whoop. When in 1642 the French planted a new settlement at Montreal, it had many hairbreadth escapes from destruction; in 1660 it was only saved by the deathless valour of seventeen French heroes, who at the cost of their lives defended a palisaded enclosure at the Long Sault on the Ottawa river, against incredible odds. That was the end of twenty years of the Iroquois terror. The settlers had also to deal with English enmity: during the foolish war of Charles I. with France, an English fleet seized Quebec; it was held from 1629 to 1632, when it was handed back. This was the beginning of a long conflict. In face of all these difficulties, it is not surprising that French Canada made very little progress, and was, at the end of the period, not to be compared for numbers and wealth with the English settlements farther south. But it had established a wonderful tradition of courage and daring; an atmosphere of romance hangs over it; and better days were soon to dawn.

Meanwhile in the south the English had, in a haphazard and unregulated way, been planting settlements quite unlike any that had yet been made by any of the European peoples.

In 1606, in the hope of renewing with more success the old projects of Sir Walter Raleigh, two Virginia companies were founded with royal charters, to plant settlements re-

spectively to the south and to the north of the 41st degree of north latitude. The northern company, which came to be known as the Plymouth Company, never did anything of importance. But the southern company, backed by a number of London merchants and public men, sent out a party of emigrants who, on 16th April 1607, reached land at the southern point of Chesapeake Bay, and on 13th May gave the name of Jamestown, in honour of the king, to the first permanent English settlement on the American continent.

During its first years the new settlement had a troublous time. The emigrants were of an unsatisfactory type, restless and disappointed when they found no gold. The mortality among them was very heavy. The Indians, unwisely handled, became hostile ; and the colony was perhaps only saved from extinction by the energy of the romantic adventurer, Captain John Smith.¹ But from about 1612 the colony began to look up. The settlers had lighted upon a rich and fertile country where communication was made easy by a network of navigable waterways. They soon found that the soil was well suited for growing tobacco, which at an early date became their staple product and was even used instead of money. Though current opinion (which King James himself expounded in a treatise) regarded tobacco-smoking as a dirty and immoral habit, the pleasant vice rapidly grew in Europe ; and Virginia, like the West Indies, profited. The new colony was largely settled by means of grants of land to Englishmen of the country gentleman class, who brought out sons of their fathers' tenantry to cultivate their lands. There were comparatively few independent emigrants of the poorer classes, because the passage cost about £20—equivalent to at least £100 of our money ; such men came mainly as ' indentured servants,' selling their services for a number of years to cover the cost of the passage. Criminals and other undesirables were also sent out ; after serving for a period under forced labour, they drifted into the class which came to be known as the ' mean whites.' As tobacco could most cheaply be cultivated by slave-labour, negroes soon (1620) began to be imported, though their numbers remained small during this period. Already Virginia was assuming the character of an aristocratic settlement,

¹ John Smith's autobiography is full of stories of wild adventure, which may or may not be true ; it is well worth reading. There is a reprint of Smith's *History of Virginia* in Rouse's English Classics.

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where the chief citizens were large planters in great houses, surrounded by dependents and retainers

The problem of managing the affairs of the first English colony led to some interesting experiments. At first the control was vested in the company, checked by a royal council. In 1619, however, the company's governor summoned a representative assembly of two members from each plantation and two from each county. Nobody took any objection to what seemed a natural and English mode of procedure, and thus the first English colony saw the establishment of the first representative assembly ever created outside of Europe. All the other colonies were to follow this example, as if by instinct. Self-government was in the bones of the English settlers, and its influence, by ensuring that local knowledge was considered, largely accounted for the colony's success. Very little attention was aroused by the meeting of this assembly, which was taken as a matter of course, but it was an event of fundamental importance in the history of the British Commonwealth because it indicated what was to be its future development. When, in 1624, the direct authority of the company was brought to an end, and the Crown became responsible for the appointment of the colonial governor, and, through him, for the executive government of the colony, Virginia attained the form of government which was to be characteristic of the English colonial system—an executive controlled by the Crown, and a legislature elected by the people.

The very quietness with which this system came into existence was significant. It implied that it was taken for granted that emigrant Englishmen carried with them to their new homes their 'inherited liberties,' including the right to be consulted, through their representatives, in the framing of the laws under which they lived, so far as these were variations from the accepted principles of the English Common Law. Throughout the great colonising period which was now opening, this doctrine was always regarded as almost an axiom. Thus in 1620, the very year after the first meeting of the Virginia Assembly, a similar body was summoned in the Bermudas, though these islands—made known by the shipwreck of Sir George Somers in 1608—had been first settled only in 1612, and had a mere handful of inhabitants in 1620.

But the fact that the emigrant Englishman carried with him the rights of self-government did not mean that he

ceased to be a member of the commonwealth from which he had sprung. On the contrary, his English citizenship was held to be the safeguard of his civil liberties. He still lived under English law, and was subject to the executive authority of the English Crown; and none of the *emigrants* of this period, not even those who left England because they disapproved of the royal policy, ever wished to cut themselves off from the commonwealth, or to shake off their allegiance to the Crown. Hence every colonising enterprise, however independent, strove to regularise its position in the commonwealth by obtaining a charter from the Crown, or from its agents.

In 1620 a new field of colonial enterprise was opened by the establishment of the Council for New England, to take the place of the ineffective Plymouth Company of 1606. It was empowered both to initiate enterprises on its own account, and to make grants of land to others. Under the direction of its most enterprising member, Sir Ferdinando Gorges, several little settlements were made in the regions later known as Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

But the main work of settlement in these northern lands was to be due, not to the activity of the Council for New England, but to a new and potent factor, the factor of religious enthusiasm. In the very year in which the Council was founded, but without its assistance, the Pilgrim Fathers sailed for New England.

When it became plain that neither Elizabeth nor James I. was going to allow the English Church to be reconstituted on a thoroughly Puritan model, some groups of enthusiasts had begun to emigrate to Holland. One such group went as early as 1593. In 1606 another group, a whole congregation with their minister at their head, went to Holland from Scrooby in Lincolnshire. But they were not happy in Holland: too much laxity surrounded them, and they feared lest their children should cease to be Englishmen. They therefore negotiated with the London Virginia Company for permission to settle in its territory, which was given them; and, after various mishaps and delays, the little pious company set sail from Plymouth (August 1620) in the historic *Mayflower*. The winds carried them not to warm Virginia, but to the inhospitable shores of Cape Cod, where they landed, and gave the name of Plymouth to their first settlement.¹ Fortunately the first winter was mild, and the Indians were friendly. But even so, the little company

¹ See the map of the early New England settlements, Atlas, Plate 54 (b).

of poor and humble folk suffered great hardships; and it was only by reason of their own staunchness and the wisdom of their elected governor, William Bradford, that the tiny settlement took root. The ~~London~~ partners who had financed it were bought out; and the small congregation of the faithful were left undisturbed to manage their own affairs. The basis of their organisation was naturally that of their church; the free citizens were the church members; and the church, standing in the centre of their stockaded enclosure, was their fort as well as their sanctuary.

The modest settlement at Plymouth continued to maintain its distinct existence until, at the end of the century, it was merged in its later and greater neighbour, Massachusetts. It enjoyed no marked prosperity, and showed no vigour in expansion. Its inoffensive people were left undisturbed in the enjoyment of their complete autonomy. Yet, though they had left England to make a Bible Commonwealth of their own, they regarded themselves still as Englishmen and subjects of the English Crown; they accepted English law; and, like every other group of colonists, prided themselves upon their enjoyment of the rights and privileges of Englishmen.

But, obscure and humble as they were, the Pilgrim Fathers had started a new era in colonisation. They had marked out the path which, before many years had passed, was to be followed by a remarkable stream of emigrants. This ~~emigration~~ was the direct outcome of the conflict over political and religious questions which had already begun in England while the first colonies were being planted; and to this conflict, which was to exercise the most profound influence upon the character and development of the whole commonwealth, we must next turn.

[Payne's *European Colonies* gives a good general sketch, though now somewhat out of date; a better and more recent account is given in Abbott's *Expansion of Europe*. Doyle's *English in America* (3 vols.) is the best English book on the period; G. L. Beer's *Origins of the British Colonial System* and Egerton's *British Colonial Policy* are books of the highest value on their subjects; W. L. Grant's *History of Canada* is a well-written short book; Parkman's *Pioneers of France in the New World*, and *The Jesuits in North America* are brilliant and vivid books on the early history of Canada; Channing's *History of the United States* gives the results of modern scholarship; Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History of America* (8 vols.) is a condensed repository and bibliography for all the American settlements of all nations; Hunter's *British India* gives a spirited account of early conflicts in India.]

CHAPTER III

THE CONFLICT OF CROWN AND PARLIAMENT

(A.D. 1603-1629)

James I and VI, 1603 Charles I, 1625.

§ 1. *The General Grounds of Conflict*

JAMES VI of Scotland, bullied by his nobles and the ministers of the Kirk, and always short of money, had long watched with envy, across the border, the wealth and undisputed power of Elizabeth, whose legitimate heir he was. He was a man of intelligence and learning, widely read in theology, and he possessed a sound theoretical grasp of European politics. Vain, timid, self-important, good-natured, unbusinesslike and pedantic, he would have done better as a professor than as a king. He was much influenced by the fashionable doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings. When he succeeded to the thrones of England and Ireland in 1603, he hoped at last to enjoy the unrestricted authority which in his view a king ought to possess. But from the outset he found himself faced by difficulties.

In the first place religious parties were troublesome. James, like Elizabeth, was willing enough to leave men a great deal of freedom provided that the control of the Crown through the bishops over the Church was not weakened or challenged, but he had no intention of giving way either to the Catholics or to the Puritans, both of whom appeared to challenge royal authority, Catholics by asserting the papal supremacy, Puritans by desiring a popular element in Church government. Yet both parties hoped, at the beginning of the reign, that the change from Elizabeth's régime might be favourable to them.

In the first months of the reign some Catholics were mixed up in an obscure and foolish plot to seize the king. It came to nothing, and after its failure a handful of the more desperate Catholics formed a conspiracy to blow up the Houses of Parliament on 5th November 1605. The discovery of this Gunpowder Plot, and of a whiskered

desperado romantically surrounded by barrels of gunpowder in a cellar, aroused an excitement altogether out of proportion to its importance. ridiculously enough, its anniversary was regularly celebrated by small boys until quite recently. It increased the eagerness of Parliament to deal more severely with Catholics. James deserves credit for having resisted, but his resistance aggravated his difficulties with Parliament.

On the other hand, the Puritans in a very largely signed petition demanded a revision of the practices of the Church of England. James went further than Elizabeth had ever done, by calling and presiding over a conference between the bishops and the Puritan leaders at Hampton Court (1604). But no material concession was made to them; the king made it plain that in his view the authority of the Crown would be endangered by any weakening of the power of the bishops—'No Bishop, No King,' was his motto. The only important result of the Hampton Court Conference—but it was a great one—was that a new translation of the Bible by a committee of learned clergy was set on foot. Its outcome was the noble Authorised Version, published in 1611, which has been one of the greatest factors in moulding the character of the British peoples. Soon after the conference the Convocation of the Church drew up a series of canons or rules, designed for the purpose of giving a flat negative to the more extreme Puritan demands, and the enforcement of these led a number of Puritan clergy to resign their livings. The refusal of the king and the bishops to make any concession to the Puritans made yet another subject of complaint in Parliament.

In the second place, the king's foreign policy, which as we have already seen aimed at making friends with Spain and at maintaining peace in Europe, was always attended with difficulties. He made, as we have seen, a peace with Spain in 1604, but it was an unsatisfactory peace, and things did not go as he wanted them. On the one hand Spain never understood or sympathised with the real aim of his policy. On the other hand there was always a strong war party even at court, and the Puritans in Parliament were generally eager for a Protestant war, and resented what they regarded as James' subservience to Spain. Foreign policy was always a ground of difference between king and Parliament. Parliament had a wholly misleading idea that Elizabeth had played the part of a Protestant heroine, whereas her policy had always been guided by national

and not by religious motives. The king, on his side, resented acutely any criticism of or interference in foreign affairs, which, like Elizabeth, he regarded as peculiarly his province.

In the third place, there was a difference of long standing, now beginning to be acute, between two groups of lawyers and two sets of law courts. The courts which were more directly under the influence of the king and the Privy Council, such as the Star Chamber, the High Commission Court for Church matters, and even the older Court of Chancery, wielded a jurisdiction which was undefined in its extent, and used methods of procedure widely different from those of the ordinary common-law courts. The lawyers who practised in the special courts were inclined to emphasise the royal prerogative, to argue (what was historically true) that all courts emanated from the king as the source of justice, and to maintain that his authority was ultimately unlimited. On the other hand the lawyers of the common-law were inclined to assert that they were the guardians of the ultimate and fundamental law of the land, the *lex terræ* of Magna Carta¹, that this law was above the king and could not be altered by him or by anyone, and that any procedure of other courts which came in conflict with it was invalid. The great exponent of this view was Sir Edward Coke, a deeply learned man. Carried to its logical extreme, the common law view would have sentenced England to an unchanging and unprogressive system. But it implied the vital principle of the supremacy of law even over the Crown. The disputes about jurisdiction between rival sets of law courts may seem petty matters. But they had great influence upon the development of the controversy between Crown and Parliament, which turned mainly upon legal precedents, and though they did not, until a later date, arouse much attention, much lay behind them.

In the fourth place, the king was a Scotsman and this meant that he lacked the instinctive sympathy with English points of view which was possessed by such peculiarly English sovereigns as Henry VIII and Elizabeth. The antipathies created by three centuries of war between the two nations were kept alive by English irritation at the number of Scotsmen who naturally followed their king to England, and at the favour shown to them. James was

¹ This was, of course, a misinterpretation of the term: see above, Book I chap. v p. 65.

eager to bring about a real union between England and Scotland, and his eagerness is much to his credit. But Parliament did not share it, and, despite all his efforts, James could get nothing more than a decision—given by the law courts, not by Parliament—that all Scots born after the date of his accession to the English throne had the rights of English subjects in England (Case of the *Post-nati*, 1607).

Lastly—and this was perhaps as important as anything—in spite of the growing prosperity of England, the English government was in financial straits. Elizabeth, for all her frugality, accumulated a heavy debt during her later years, and by large sales of Crown lands she had reduced the permanent revenue of the Crown. This meant that recourse had to be had to Parliament for relief, and Elizabeth's difficulties showed that even she, with all her popularity, found it hard to get adequate grants from Parliament. James' reckless extravagance added greatly to the difficulty. Ministers had to use every device known to the Tudors to raise money within the law, and some of these devices, though not without precedent, were open to challenge by Parliament. The result of this situation was that James was necessarily dependent upon Parliament, a position which he disliked. Later in the reign the remarkable growth of English trade relieved the situation by bringing about a great increase in customs duties, and until war threatened at the end of the reign, Parliament could be dispensed with. But until then the king by Divine Right found himself in an irritating position of dependence.

It was these difficulties which at once gave to Parliament the opportunity for claiming an increase of power, and provided it with the grounds of attack upon the Crown. Parliament indeed had no intention of claiming new powers, and no idea that it was doing so. Its members honestly believed that they were defending 'the ancient inherited liberties of England'. They did not consciously desire any change; at the most they wished to revive liberties which had been temporarily disused, and they resented the charge of being 'innovators'. Yet innovators they were, for they were groping towards a new system of national government by co-operation, and a new view of the position of the Crown, which would make the king essentially only the first official of the nation. Though they based all their arguments upon precedents, they chose their pre-

cedents from the periods which suited them best, and read modern meanings into mediæval phrases. Sometimes their imperfect historical learning misled them; thus the authorities upon which they based their claims in the preamble to the Petition of Right included a quite incorrect version of Edward I.'s Confirmation of the Charters, and a statute which had never been passed. They constantly referred to Magna Carta with veneration as a sort of fundamental unalterable law, which it never was, and put into its clauses meanings which modern scholarship has shown that they never possessed.

In the battle of precedents the weight of authority was on the whole more favourable to the contentions of the Crown than to those of Parliament on most of the questions at issue. For the Crown also rested upon precedent; and, largely as James I. and Charles I. talked about Divine Right, they never actually did anything that was not capable of a strong, or at least a plausible, legal justification. Kings by Divine Right were, in their view, responsible only to God for the way in which they exercised their powers; they were not mere officials responsible to the nation; but that did not mean that they intended to override and defy definitions of their powers which had been accepted by their predecessors. Nevertheless, though it too rested upon precedents, the Crown, equally with Parliament, was unconsciously aiming at a great change in the system of government. Divine Right monarchy was quite as inconsistent as the ideas of the Parliamentarians with the old feudal order from which both drew their precedents.

The insistence upon precedents in all the coming discussions is very characteristic of England. It implied a real respect for Law as such, and ensured that advance should be cautious and in touch with tradition. But it tended to conceal the fact that the struggle was a real conflict of principles, a conflict between two ideas of national government, both new and both undefined, of which one expressed a doctrine widely current at the time, while the other was peculiar to England. The Crown was the spokesman of one of these principles, Parliament the spokesman of the other. The whole future of the Commonwealth depended upon the outcome of this debate.

It is a blunder to think of this great but hazy controversy as a conflict between the people and the king. There were advocates of both views in the nation, and if it had been conceivable that the issue should be clearly defined

and put to a popular vote, the vote would probably have gone in favour of the king's view. It is equally a blunder to think of Parliament as a democratic body, coming to Westminster with mandates from large constituencies. One half of Parliament was the House of Lords, consisting of hereditary peers and of bishops nominated by the king, and, though it contained men who favoured the Commons in the conflict, the House of Lords was on the whole inclined to take the king's side. Even the House of Commons, which was the active party in the conflict, must be thought of primarily as an assembly of country gentlemen, and of lawyers drawn from the same social class, with a mere sprinkling of merchants from London and a few other trading towns. The ninety-two knights of the shire who formed the most dignified element in the House of Commons, were required by law to be 'gentlemen born,' a term which had at that date a perfectly definite meaning, they were all wealthy squires. The representatives of the boroughs, who numbered nearly four hundred, might have been expected to speak rather for the trading classes. If they had done so the trading interest would have been grossly over-represented. But in fact it was not so. Very many of the boroughs were tiny places, little more than villages, often clustered round the park-gates of some rural magnate. The right of voting in them varied greatly, according to local custom, but was only in a few places widely distributed. There were no newspapers to disseminate rival 'programmes,' and no elaborate electioneering. In most cases the boroughs were glad to nominate two of the gentlemen of their neighbourhood, or to accept their recommendations. The House of Commons was thus in effect drawn from among the most active and public-spirited members of a single class, that of the country gentlemen, blended with members of a single profession, that of law, which was mainly recruited from the same class. But the country gentlemen were the most politically active class in England, the best educated, and the most experienced in the work of administration. They were the natural and accepted leaders of the most important section of the community. Better than any other class, they could, at this date, speak for the nation, though their opinions, as expressed in Parliament, were probably in advance of those of the greater part of the nation, which had indeed no very definite opinions at all.

§ 2 *James I and his Parliaments*

Such an assembly was difficult to deal with, it could neither be browbeaten nor corrupted, and King James, and his son after him, not only quarrelled with every Parliament which they summoned, but found each more troublesome and exacting than the last. James' first Parliament, which had four sessions between 1604 and 1611, was relatively amenable. But in its first session it made trouble because disputed elections had been referred to the Court of Chancery, and successfully insisted that it must settle all such questions itself, it complained of the treatment of Puritans and of undue leniency to Catholics, it dealt most unwillingly with the king's favourite project of a union with Scotland and in the end hung it up indefinitely, it attacked the privileges granted to trading companies, it refused to come to an agreement on a proposal to commute the king's feudal dues for a fixed annual payment—in itself a not unreasonable reform, and though it voted some money to the king gave a quite inadequate sum, and insisted upon having its grievances redressed before it would give any more.

Above all, in its last session it raised a great storm over the question of 'impositions,' or additional import duties about which there was to be immense controversy in the future. Import duties had always formed a large part of the royal revenues. The old traditional customs duties, under the name of tonnage and poundage, were habitually granted to each king for life by the first Parliament of his reign, but many lawyers held that they belonged to the king in any case, apart from parliamentary grants. Naturally the rates charged needed to be revised from time to time, especially when new commodities became important, and the Crown had frequently exercised the right either of imposing new duties or revising the old ones. In 1606 a London merchant, Bate, had refused to pay a duty on currants on the ground that it was not part of the ancient customs, but the judgment of the courts had gone against him. In 1608 the Lord Treasurer, Cecil, issued a revised Book of Rates, in which many changes were made. This was what raised the storm about impositions, the Commons claiming that no duties over and above the ancient ones covered by tonnage and poundage could be levied without their consent. Precedent was in favour of the king. But there could be no doubt about the danger of such a power,

especially now that foreign trade was attaining to an importance it had never reached earlier. The king might get from this source enough to make him independent of Parliament. There was a stormy debate (1610), but no settlement was reached, and the question remained undecided for thirty years. It afforded an illustration of the insufficiency of precedents as a foundation for political liberty.

The first Parliament had been unsatisfactory, the second was worse. It was summoned in 1614 because the financial outlook was black. The king tried to influence the elections beforehand but that only brought a storm upon his head. The Commons declined to discuss grants until they had discussed grievances, and, after much noise and fury the 'Addled' Parliament was dissolved with nothing done.

Seven years passed before a third Parliament was summoned in 1621. The interval was possible because of the steadily improved yield of customs duties, and this naturally did not make Parliament when it did meet, more yielding on the subject of impositions. In the meanwhile many things, which displeased Parliament had happened. Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, had become ominously influential at court, a royal favourite, Carr, Earl of Somerset, had dazzled and disgusted England with his lavishness, and had been ruined by the foul atmosphere of divorce and poison-mysteries with which he surrounded himself, a second and more brilliant favourite ~~Villiers~~ Villiers, Earl of Buckingham, was in the ascendant, Sir Walter ~~Raleigh~~ Raleigh, last of the Elizabethans, had been executed, so men said, on the demand of Spain, and above all the Thirty Years War had broken out, and Protestantism was in danger. Parliament was in no forthcoming humour when it met in 1621. What is more, it now had a group of tried and tested leaders. One of these, just emerging, was John Pym. Another was the great lawyer, Sir Edward Coke, who had been Chief Justice, but had been dismissed by the king for his persistent opposition to the prerogative courts, and the great lawyer was eager to renew the strife in a new arena.

Parliament made a totally inadequate grant for an expedition to relieve the Palatinate. But it gave its main attention to the redress of grievances. It took up the old question of monopolies, which James had been granting on a large scale, and, not content with a bill against monopolies, resolved to punish Sir Giles Mompesson, a connexion of Buckingham's, who had flagrantly abused patents granted

to him. For that purpose the Commons revived the old practice of 'impeaching' the offender before the House of Lords, which had been invented in Edward III.'s time,¹ but long since disused. The revival of impeachment provided the Commons with a very formidable weapon, a legal process by which they could, on behalf of the nation, bring to trial before the House of Lords agents of government who misused their power. Mompesson forestalled condemnation by flight to the Continent.

But the weapon was soon to be used against higher game —no less a man than Sir Francis Bacon, now Lord Chancellor, who was charged with corruption in the exercise of his judicial functions. Bacon had undoubtedly been guilty of irregularities in taking gifts from parties to cases. But it is probable that his real offence lay deeper. He had been the defender of the prerogative courts against Sir Edward Coke and the common-lawyers. He was found guilty and crushingly punished: his public life was at an end (1621). And the House of Commons realised that it possessed, in impeachment, a very powerful and effective means of calling to account the agents of government.

Later, when asked to vote more money to help the Elector Palatine, the Commons drafted a petition demanding greater severity against the Catholics, and protesting against the king's Spanish policy. This was to touch the king in his tenderest spots: religious policy and foreign policy being in his view (as in Elizabeth's) his very peculiar prerogatives. But when he rebuked the Commons for trenching on his prerogatives (as Elizabeth had also done), they replied by entering upon their journals a solemn protest to the effect that all affairs concerning king, and realm and church were proper subjects of counsel and debate in Parliament. Here, in truth, a great issue was raised. There was to be no question of national policy reserved for the king's sole discretion: no subject not liable to review and criticism by Parliament. James sent for the journals and tore out the offending passages with his own hands. But you cannot mend the weather by smashing the barometer. Parliament was first prorogued and then dissolved, without having made provision for the Palatinate; and three of its members, including old Sir Edward Coke, were sent to the Tower.

If he could, James would have had no further parliaments. But the breach with Spain, which came in 1624, made grants

¹ See above, Book II. chap. vii. p. 151.

of money necessary ; moreover it might be hoped that the war with Spain, so often demanded by the Commons, would be popular. A new Parliament, therefore, was called for 1624. It included, besides the old leaders, two great men : the eloquent, generous, enthusiastic Cornish knight, Sir John Eliot, an impassioned lover of what he believed to be the tradition of English liberty ; and the deeply learned historical and legal scholar, John Selden. In this Parliament Buckingham tried to make an alliance with the popular party, on the strength of the part he had played in breaking with Spain. He succeeded in getting a substantial grant, though only half of what was needed. But it was given on the significant condition that treasurers appointed by Parliament should control the money, and only issue it for the purpose for which it had been voted. Moreover this Parliament imitated its predecessor by impeaching a great official—the Lord Treasurer Middlesex, who had done much to bring the finances into good order, but had also been guilty of irregularities. In this act the Commons were, it is true, hounded on by Buckingham, whom Middlesex had opposed in the matter of the Spanish War. But the great weapon of attack had been sharpened. When a Lord Chancellor and a Lord Treasurer had fallen before it, who was safe ? The death of James, however, brought his fourth Parliament to a premature end, and the final grapple was postponed to the reign of his successor.

§ 3. *Charles I. and the Petition of Right.*

Charles I., a young and handsome prince, with many graces and every domestic virtue, ought to have been able to deal successfully with his parliaments at the opening of the reign, especially as he and his friend Buckingham had been at pains to cultivate the last Parliament, and were plunging into a popular war, and making ready to take part in a great coalition for the relief of the German Protestants. But Charles was at once proud and reticent, always under the influence of some more active mind, even more impatient of criticism than his father, and apt to be uncandid in dealing with opposition which he thought improper. Moreover Buckingham, to whom he entrusted the practical control of affairs, was a reckless and slapdash person, incapable of making sound plans or of sticking to any plans. The flagrantly incompetent conduct of the war gave to Parliament the best of excuses for interfering

in matters which it would not have ventured to touch under the Tudors. At the same time the refusal of the Commons to provide the funds wherewith the king could honour his obligations drove him to devices which laid him open to attack. After four years of unceasing and embittered conflict, and unbroken and humiliating failure abroad, Parliament had almost got to the point of claiming to control the conduct of government, a claim which it would never have dreamt of putting forward even ten years earlier ; and Charles, to maintain the royal authority, was reduced to the necessity of suddenly liquidating his continental obligations, and trying to get on without a Parliament or the funds that it alone could give.

Not the least of the reasons for the suspicion with which he was regarded by the Commons was that he had identified himself with a new party in the Church, which was now becoming aggressive. James I., though bent upon maintaining the authority of the bishops, and through them of the Crown, was himself a Calvinist in doctrine, as were most of his prelates. But during the later years of his reign—those years in which the influence of Charles and his friend Buckingham was dominant—a new school of thought had been rising into vogue. In doctrine it was Arminian, repudiating the characteristic Calvinist doctrine of predestination. It laid less stress than the Puritans on preaching, and more on ceremonial. It refused to accept the exclusive emphasis which the Puritans laid upon the Bible, and held that the traditional usages and festivals of the Church ought to be binding when not inconsistent with Scripture. This school of thought, which had never been absent throughout the English reformation, but was now stronger and more earnest than ever, may be called the Anglo-Catholic party. Its ablest living representative was William Laud, Bishop of St. David's, whom Charles I. made Bishop of London, and to whose advice he listened on all Church matters. Laud was a reformer, like the Puritans, and desired to remodel the English Church after his own mind. And he and his school, as was natural, were friends of the monarchy which supported them, and advocates of the doctrine of Divine Right.

When Charles' first Parliament met, in June 1625, they voted only £140,000 for the expenses of a war upon which the king had pledged himself to spend at least £700,000 a year. At the same time they introduced an alarming innovation. The duties known as tonnage and poundage

(which formed an essential part of the revenue) by custom had to be granted to the Crown by the first Parliament of the reign. They had been granted to every successive king for life ; but this Parliament proposed to grant them for one year only, as a security against being dismissed. Then they proceeded to deal with religious matters, demanding greater strictness towards Catholics, and condemning in set terms a treatise by a leading Anglo-Catholic, whom they committed to the sergeant-at-arms. The king promptly appointed him a royal chaplain. Later, in response to an earnest appeal for money to carry out the national obligations, the Commons returned an evasive reply, and proceeded to make a violent attack upon Buckingham and the king's other advisers. Charles lost patience and dissolved the Parliament, when it had sat for less than two months, and before it had even had time to pass the Tonnage and Poundage Act.

Six months later (1626), his financial straits compelled him to summon another Parliament. In the meantime a disastrous expedition to Cadiz had discredited England abroad ; English ships had been promised to France to crush the Protestants of La Rochelle, whose revolt was preventing France from giving help in Germany ; and the unhappy King of Denmark was pressing for his promised subsidies. Desperate for money, Charles had tried to raise a compulsory loan. When Parliament met, the first act of the Commons was to appoint a committee of grievances and to demand an inquiry into the mismanagement of the war. A direct attack was opened against Buckingham ; and no grants of the direly needed money were even to be discussed until grievances were redressed. Even in the Lords Buckingham was bitterly attacked ; while the Commons proceeded to draw up crushing articles of impeachment against him. This was in effect an assertion of the responsibility of ministers to Parliament. When Sir John Eliot opened the impeachment before the Lords, he compared Buckingham to Sejanus, the tool of the tyrant Tiberius. For this insult Eliot was sent to the Tower. The Commons declined to transact business until he was released, and the king had to release him. Then the business which the Commons did condescend to transact was a protest that all payments of tonnage and poundage (which the Crown had been collecting in spite of the failure to pass the Act) were illegal without their consent ; and refused to grant any money till Buckingham was dismissed. Threatened

with the loss of a large proportion of his already wholly insufficient revenue, and with the ruin of his dearest friend, Charles dissolved this Parliament also, after only four months. He had not received a penny; and he and the country were dishonoured in the eyes of the world. Badly as the war had been mismanaged, it is not surprising that Charles felt he was unfairly used.

Money he must have. He continued to levy tonnage and poundage: indeed, suddenly to drop all the customs duties would have caused confusion in trade. He tried, through the justices of the peace, to get the country to pay as a free gift what it would have paid if a subsidy had been granted, but the result was small. He levied money on the maritime counties for the provision of ships: this had often been done before, and the money came in. He mortgaged Crown lands. Finally, he resolved to exact as a forced loan what he could not get as a parliamentary grant or as a free gift. This was his nearest approach to formal illegality: the judges declined to declare it legal, and many people refused to pay. To compel them, gentlemen who refused payment were thrown into prison, humbler men were pressed for soldiers. Five knights, thus imprisoned, demanded a writ of *habeas corpus* in the King's Bench (1627). In answer to that writ, the cause of imprisonment ought to be shown by the gaoler. The only cause given by the king's representative was that the knights were imprisoned *per speciale mandatum regis*—by the king's special command; and they argued that for the safety of the realm there must reside in government a discretionary power of this kind, to be used in emergency. The argument had some plausibility; every existing government possessed and used such a power, and Elizabeth had often used it. But the known circumstances under which the five knights had been imprisoned—for refusing to subscribe to a forced loan which the judges would not declare legal—did not add to its cogency.

Meanwhile everything was going wrong with the war. Denmark, lacking the promised help, was crushed, and the German Protestants were at the mercy of the Catholics; a mad war with France had been added to the war with Spain, and the Duke of Buckingham had led a fleet and an army to disaster on the isle of Ré (1626). It was in these circumstances that the king, more desperate for money than ever, had to meet his third Parliament (March 1628).

The Commons felt that the crisis was grave. Their

leaders decided that the impeachment of Buckingham had best be dropped, since far deeper issues had been raised than any mere personal controversy. Unparliamentary taxation—arbitrary imprisonment: if these were allowed to establish themselves, English liberty was as good as dead. The sovereignty of law must be enforced: the rights of the representative house must be maintained. These were the supreme duties of this Parliament, which must take precedence of all money grants. They drew up a grave and weighty statement of the breaches of law which had recently taken place, and of the prescriptive and inviolable rights of Englishmen which, in their view, these acts had infringed. This document, known as the Petition of Right (1628), has always ranked next to Magna Carta among the bulwarks of English liberty. It deserves to rank higher, for it marks a far clearer definition and a far greater advance than Magna Carta. It declared the unlawfulness of any 'gift, loan, benevolence, tax or suchlike charge,' without parliamentary grant. These words, it is true, did not expressly mention customs duties, and the indefiniteness left room for further dispute. But they ruled out, at any rate, every form of direct taxation. It declared the imprisonment of any man without cause shown to be illegal: the cause must be shown in answer to a writ of *habeas corpus*. There were other clauses. But these were the essential points. They left the personal liberty of the subject, and the control of taxation by Parliament, more clearly defined than they had ever been before.

The Lords agreed to the demands embodied in this great document. The king struggled to avoid formally accepting it. He offered a carefully drafted statement, asserting his obligation to maintain the laws and customs of the realm *as well as* his own prerogative. That would not satisfy. He had to bow his proud head: *soit droit fait comme est désiré*.

But the Commons were not content with this great victory. They proceeded to attack divines who had exalted the royal prerogative. They impeached Roger ~~Manwaring~~, who had preached that parliamentary assent was not necessary for taxation, and whose sermons had been licensed by the king. They drew up a remonstrance demanding the removal of the Duke of Buckingham. In a second session (1629) they raised once more the question of tonnage and poundage, and were proceeding to attack Laud and others of his school, when the king ordered an

adjournment. Thereupon the doors of the House were locked, and the Speaker was forcibly held down in his chair while articles were read and passed, protesting against the innovations in religion and the collection of tonnage and poundage.

The king replied by dissolving the House, and issued a public declaration, wherein he complained (not wholly without reason) that Parliament had first induced him to go to war and then traded on his necessities. Finally he imprisoned nine members of the House of Commons, including their great leader, Sir John Eliot. It was not easy to reconcile this with the Petition of Right, so recently accepted. Eliot died in prison two years later, and two of his companions were not released till 1640.

So ended the first great phase of the conflict. It had led to one important achievement the Petition of Right. But it had also shown the House of Commons aspiring to something like control of the executive government, and had caused many men to ask whether efficient government would be possible if an assembly so large and variable had it in its power to make government at any moment impossible. One man who was inclined to share this view was Sir Thomas Wentworth,¹ a great squire of Yorkshire, who had played one of the leading parts in the opposition to Buckingham, and even in the drafting of the Petition of Right. To overthrow an incompetent minister was one thing, to make government impossible was another. He had helped in both. But he was a lover of efficiency, of what he called 'Thorough'. The murder of Buckingham (1628) had removed the chief cause of inefficiency and made a better system possible. Parliament had no clear ideas as to the kind of system it would desire to establish. Conscious of his own ability, Wentworth was persuaded to enter the service of the king, and prepared to help him to make government efficient and to do without Parliament. To this day men quarrel as to whether Wentworth deserved to be called an apostate, or whether his action was due to a change of view such as may suddenly come to a man or a nation when they begin to realise what is the inevitable goal of the path on which they have set their feet.

Helped by Wentworth and by Laud, Charles I. entered upon an experiment in government, the aim of which was to show that, without overriding or disregarding the laws

¹ There is a short life of Wentworth (Strafford) by H. D. Trail in the English Men of Action Series.

of the land, monarchy, when freed from vexatious and unreasonable parliamentary criticism, could give to the people orderly peace, prosperity and happiness. In England, to all outward seeming, the experiment long appeared to be wholly successful, though, as we shall see, the movement of emigration to the New World afforded an evidence of dissatisfaction which ought not to have been lightly regarded. In Ireland also the system of 'Thorough' seemed to be triumphantly successful, though in reality it prepared great troubles for the future. But in Scotland the government of Charles I. and Laud aroused such passionate resistance, such an outburst of national feeling, that the whole experiment broke down; and England also, after an interval of calm, found herself suddenly drawn into the throes of revolution. To Ireland and to Scotland, therefore, we must next turn; for their history had now become vital in the development of the Commonwealth.

[A very readable account of the period will be found in G. M. Trevelyan's *England under the Stuarts*, a more detailed treatment in F. C. Montague's *England from the Accession of James I. to the Restoration*. The period is covered by S. R. Gardiner's monumental *History of England from 1603 to 1642* (10 vols.), which is the standard authority; also by Ranke's *History of England, principally in the seventeenth century*, and by Hallam's *Constitutional History*. Gardiner's *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution* is valuable, and has a good introduction; the reign of James I. is covered by Prothero's *Constitutional Documents*. There is a shorter and very good account in Gardiner's *Puritan Revolution* (Epochs of Modern History). Lord Acton has a lecture on the Puritan Revolution in his *Lectures on Modern History*.]

CHAPTER IV

IRELAND AND SCOTLAND UNDER THE EARLY STEWARTS

(A.D. 1603-1640)

§ 1 *Ireland: the Plantation of Ulster*

At the very moment of James I's accession the surrender of the Earl of Tyrone, who had raised so great a rebellion at the end of Elizabeth's reign, had ended the long and painful process of the conquest of Ireland. The authority of the Crown was recognised throughout the country, and it was now possible to organise an orderly and peaceful system. If English law had been justly and firmly administered, if Irish proprietors of land had been made to feel that they were secure in their possessions, and encouraged to develop them under the protection of the law, and if a reasonable toleration had been allowed to the Catholic majority, Ireland might still have been reconciled to the destruction of the old tribal system which indeed had meant unceasing anarchy, and even the bitter memories of the Elizabethan conquest might have been gradually obliterated. It was not too late to make a new start, and in Ireland at any rate the coming of the new dynasty might have proved itself a blessing.

A good beginning was made. A general pardon was issued. The head of the O'Donnells was created Earl of Tyrconnell (Donegal). Tyrone was left in possession of his lands. Sir Arthur Chichester, whom James sent to Ireland as Deputy in 1604, was a just man and something of a statesman, who saw that reconciliation was needed, and tried to attain it. English law was successfully established, and the judges on circuit seem even to have been welcomed as protectors of the weak. Moreover the Catholics had a surcease of persecution.

But the bad traditions of the last age were still too strong. On the one hand, too many Englishmen had learnt to believe that the dispossession of Irish landowners and their replacement by English colonists was the only way to settle

the country, and their greed for easily gotten lands added strength to this idea. On the other hand, the Irish chieftains found it hard to reconcile themselves to the loss of their old authority, or to recognise those who had been their vassals as independent landowners. These fears might have died down if the fear of fresh confiscations and 'plantations' like that of Munster had not always haunted them.

A quarrel between the reconciled Tyrone and one of his former vassals brought on a new crisis. The question was to have been referred to the king. But instead of going to England, Tyrone—suspecting with or without reason, that he would be arrested if he went—fled the country (1607) never to return, in company with the chiefs of the O'Donnells and of the Maguires of Fermanagh. There was obscure talk of a plot for a new rising to be backed by Spain, with which Tyrone may or may not have been associated. Anyway, his lands and those of the other fugitives were declared confiscated. Claimants to the succession, disappointed in their demands, broke out in a brief insurrection, and this provided the occasion for a wholesale confiscation of all the lands in six counties and for a scheme of plantation on a bigger scale than anything that had gone before—the plantation of Ulster, 1608. Every owner in the six counties was dispossessed, and huge allotments were made in the old method—the city of London being granted the whole of the county of Coleraine and the town of Derry to which the name of Londonderry was henceforward assigned. As before many of the grantees failed to fulfil the conditions of their grants, and there was wholesale corruption and land jobbing.

But into the plantation of Ulster came an element which had never taken part in any earlier plantation. Because the King of England and Ireland was now also King of Scotland, many Scots came over and took lands from the original grantees. They brought with them the drive in dustry they had learnt in a barren land where hard work was necessary for livelihood and very soon they began to prosper. They brought with them also the Scottish form of Protestantism, and in that part of Ireland where the cruel policy of plantation was most successfully carried out, it was not the English but the Scottish mode of life and religious belief that was established. The fortunes of the three nations were thus intertwined on the unhappy soil of Ireland.

The plantation of Ulster was followed later in the reign

of James I by other plantations carried out with equal disregard of justice, in Wexford, Longford, and other districts. The policy of reconciliation had been abandoned before it had been fairly started. These plantations uprooted any hope there might have been that the Irish community would settle down with a sense of security. And the experience of Ulster, and the knowledge that other plantations were designed led to what may almost be described as the beginning of parliamentary opposition in Ireland.

It is characteristic of the curious fondness of the British mind for seeking legality even as a cover for injustice that James I, much as he disliked parliaments, decided in 1611 to summon the Irish Parliament for the purpose of confirming what had been done in Ulster. At the same time it was intended to introduce new laws against the Catholics. The Irish Parliament since the Elizabethan conquest included representatives from all parts of the country. But in order to ensure a Protestant majority, James decided to create no less than thirty-nine new parliamentary boroughs whose electoral rights were to be exercised by purely Protestant corporations. This plan attempt to pack the house led to a protest from the nobles of the Pale against the creation of corporations which 'could tend to naught else but that penal laws should be imposed upon your subjects. When the Parliament met in 1613 the Catholics in both houses seceded and refused to do any business unless they were allowed to send a deputation to lay their grievances before the king. James shrewdly observing that petitions were better than rebellions appointed a commission of inquiry, and although it made no very satisfactory report the intended persecuting Act was dropped, and parliamentary action had been proved to have some utility. In the next session Parliament granted a subsidy, and was rewarded by being allowed to pass Acts removing all legal distinctions between the races in Ireland and withdrawing the prohibition of intermarriage between Irish and Scots. This might have been the beginning of a better era, but that was not to be. It was at any rate the beginning of a constitutional opposition in Ireland as in the other parts of the islands against the high-handed and unenlightened policy of government.

Early in Charles I's reign there seemed to have arrived a yet better opportunity for reconciliation. With wars against France and Spain on his hands, and no funds forth-

coming from his English Parliament, Charles was anxious both to keep Ireland quiet, and if possible to get money from it—without a Parliament, if that could be managed. In 1626, therefore, he instructed the Lord Deputy, LORD Falkland, to sound the nobility and gentry as to whether they would pay for the upkeep of an army if he granted them certain concessions, which came to be known as the ‘graces.’ Fines for non-attendance at church were to be dropped. The oath of supremacy on taking office was to be modified to suit Catholics. Above all, possession of land for sixty years was to constitute an indefeasible title, thus barring future confiscations and plantations. After some discussion, a grant of £40,000 per annum was agreed upon, the bargain to be subsequently ratified by Parliament. On these lines settlement and good feeling were possible.

But the Parliament which was to have ratified the agreement was postponed from year to year, and meanwhile the Lord Deputy began so flagrant a prosecution of the Byrnes in Wicklow, with a view to dispossessing them for a new plantation, that the old distrust was aroused. A golden opportunity for conciliation had been lost.

§ 2 *The Irish Policy of Wentworth*

In 1632 Charles sent to Ireland the ablest man who had yet taken a hand in its government—the former parliamentary leader Wentworth; and his rule forms a critical era in the vexed history of the country. Wentworth's primary aim, as is made plain by his correspondence with his friend Laud, was to turn Ireland into a stronghold of royal power, no longer a weakness as it had been in the past, but a source from which the king might draw troops and even money for his needs elsewhere. He was intelligent enough to see that one essential means of doing this was to make the country prosperous and contented. He did much in that direction during his brief tenure of office, illustrating that efficiency in government to which he gave the name of ‘Thorough.’ He gave the closest attention to the development of the linen industry, which rapidly became a source of wealth to Ireland. He made a ²commercial treaty with Spain for the encouragement of Irish fisheries. He ³improved the breed of cattle, and insisted on a ⁴free export of hides and tallow, which had long been staples of Irish trade. He was at pains to preserve forests.

He brought in experts to look for ⁶minerals. On all the economic side of his policy, he did great good to Ireland, which under his rule began to enjoy a prosperity she had never known before. At the same time the maintenance of order and the administration of justice to ordinary men were firmly enforced, though Wentworth was guilty of gross injustice to individuals. Great use was made of the Court of Castle Chamber in Dublin, a court formed on the analogy of Star Chamber in England. Yet in the Ireland of Charles I. a prerogative court of this kind was less objectionable than in England. It might have served a purpose as good as Star Chamber had served under Henry VII.

But the broad features of Wentworth's policy were disfigured by all the old unhappy characteristics. In the first place he did much to confirm the belief that the pledges of the English government were not to be trusted. At a Parliament summoned in 1634—the first at which the tacit bargain on the 'graces' of 1626 could be carried into effect—he insisted that the king's needs must first be met before the subjects' grievances could be redressed. But having got a handsome grant of subsidies on the expectation that the 'graces' would be confirmed, he proceeded to grant only those of them which in his view were not inconsistent with the royal prerogative. Among those omitted was the all-important promise that possession for sixty years should constitute a title to lands. He prided himself upon the skill of this trickery: he had got a handsome price without delivering the goods. But dishonour never pays; the Irish gentry, ready to be reconciled, not only felt that they had been defrauded, but were convinced that the English government could not be trusted.

Moreover Wentworth now went on to prepare for the most iniquitous of all the plantations, which could only be carried out by a disregard of what every Irishman regarded as the pledged word of the king, for which a price had been paid. He intended to carry out a plantation of Connaught, the only province as yet untouched; to prepare for it he set on foot a series of inquiries into the titles of existing landholders in which the longest possession counted for nothing. Every one knew what the result would be. The plantation was never carried out, because the outbreak of war in Scotland and the summons of Parliament in England brought the proceedings to a close. But when the crisis came, Ireland, which was to have been the king's bulwark, was alienated and angry.

Finally, Wentworth encouraged a vicious attack upon the Puritans of the North, the most numerous and convinced section of the Irish Protestants, who were obnoxious because they shared the views of their obstinate Scottish compatriots. Suffering from this persecution, they, equally with the Catholics, were ready to repudiate the king's government. When the great crisis in the fortunes of all the islands was suddenly brought to a head by the successful resistance of the Scots, Ireland like England and Scotland, was ripe for revolution.

§ 3 *Scotland the Absolutism of James I*

We have seen in an earlier chapter¹ that no country in Europe had been more profoundly changed by the Reformation than Scotland. Not only had it aroused among the Scottish people a deep interest in theological questions and (except in parts of the Highlands), a passionate hatred of Rome, it had also intensified national feeling, and created, in the governing bodies of the Church, a national organisation. The series of representative bodies which the Presbyterian system established—kirk sessions for each parish, presbyteries for small areas, synods for provinces, and a General Assembly for the whole country—included laymen as well as clergymen and formed a far more effective expression of the national mind than the feeble and unrepresentative Scottish Parliament. This democratic Church organisation had been tempted to take a hand in politics, and the leading ministers who spoke for it, like Andrew Melville, had bullied and for a time largely controlled the king. Thus the Scottish Crown found its power restricted not only by its old enemies the nobles, but by a new and aggressive force.

But the nobles themselves, though they had unwillingly accepted it, did not like the democratic system of Presbyterianism and were not unready to help in breaking its power. By playing off the Kirk and the nobles one against the other, the king seemed to have a chance of coming to his own again. Even before his accession to the English crown James VI had used this chance with such cleverness that he might well be proud of his 'statecraft'. The strength which his new position gave to him enabled him to carry the process so far that he was able to boast to his English Parliament (as if giving them an example of what

¹ Book III chap. vi

he would do in England, if he could) : ' This I must say for Scotland, and may truly vaunt it : here I sit and govern it with my pen ; I write, and it is done ; and by a clerk of the Council I govern Scotland now—which others could not do by the sword.' Here was a plain warning. As a warning and an example the proceedings in Scotland had great influence in England, especially among the Puritans who sympathised with the Scottish system ; and the revolt which the policy of James and Charles produced in Scotland directly contributed to the final outburst of opposition in England.

By making use of the jealousy which the nobles felt for the Kirk James had in fact succeeded in establishing a complete royal control over the ordinary machinery of government. The Parliament, never effective or independent, except as an organ of baronial opposition, was reduced to a mere instrument of royal power. Borough members, appointed by the local magistrates, who were in their turn removable by the Crown became in fact royal nominees. Representatives of the lesser barons (who alone voted in the counties) were similarly managed by the sheriffs. But an even more direct control than this was achieved. By ancient custom the business to be laid before a Scottish Parliament was drawn up by the Lords of the Articles, a committee of twenty-four, consisting of representatives from each of the Estates ; all bills were drafted by this committee, and were submitted and voted on *en bloc*—a procedure which reduced Parliament to a form. James had contrived to get the nomination of the Lords of the Articles practically into his own hand.

The actual conduct of administration fell to the Privy Council, a body whose powers in Scotland were even greater than those of the council in England ; it exercised legislative, executive and judicial powers at once. Earlier the Privy Council had been partly nominated by the Estates. James succeeded in acquiring the sole privilege of nominating every member of it ; and it was through the Privy Council that he governed Scotland, though of course some of the leading nobles had to be put on the council. Virtually the king was an absolute monarch in his northern realm, especially after his accession to England, when discontented parties could not get at him. He wielded his power from London ; after 1603 he paid only one visit to Scotland, and it lasted only eleven weeks. And it must be noted that in one respect at least he used his power well. He brought to

an end the turbulence and disorder of the Border country he even reduced within limits the anarchy of the Highlands. One of his measures for this end was the proscription of the robber clan MacGregor.

The only check on the power of the Crown was in fact to be found in the representative bodies of the Kirk, and especially in the General Assembly, which was supposed to meet once a year, and which could not be easily disregarded. To complete his mastery of Scotland, therefore, James had to get rid of the General Assembly. His aim was to replace its authority by bishops nominated by himself, as in the English system, which seemed to him the ideal form of Church government. But he had to set about this change warily because the Scottish people were devoted to their system.

Even before his accession to the English crown he had obtained from the Scottish Parliament (1600) the right to nominate bishops, who should sit in Parliament as representatives of the estate of the Church, and thus entitle Parliament to speak on Church matters, which it had scarcely been able to do since the disappearance of the old bishops. But the new bishops were only parish clergymen and had as yet no ecclesiastical authority over their neighbours. At the same time James did his best to avoid meetings of the General Assembly. He allowed no meeting from 1603 to 1610, and, when in 1604 some ministers insisted on meeting, he had them prosecuted and convicted of high treason, though he did not venture to execute them. In 1606 he got an Act empowering him to endow his bishops with Church lands in possession of the Crown, and in 1610 he allowed a carefully packed Assembly to meet at Glasgow for the purpose of empowering the bishops to act as moderators (chairmen) of the provincial synods and to ordain ministers. The General Assembly and the Synods were not abolished though they were only to meet by permission of the Crown. The powers of the bishops were limited, and they had very small incomes, because most of the lands of their Roman predecessors were in the hands of the nobles. But the king had undoubtedly won a superficial victory: it was only superficial, because Scotland was still Presbyterian at heart, and deeply resented this tampering with its popular system of Church government.

But James was not yet satisfied. In 1616 he held an Assembly at Aberdeen, the most remote and least Presbyterian of Scottish towns, and got orders passed for a new confession of faith and a new form of public service. But

when he propounded five articles which he proposed to have enacted, providing for such matters as kneeling at communion, and confirmation, even the bishops urged that it would not be safe. The articles were adopted at a later Assembly at Perth (1618), but only by the votes of the bishops and the nobles. James had won another victory, but it was a victory more dangerous than a defeat.

§ 4 *The Revolt of the Scots against the Policy of Charles I*

But even yet the Scottish Church was not assimilated to the English. That was left to Charles I, who took up the task of Anglicising the Scottish Church as a duty imposed upon him by God. But, having spent almost the whole of his youth in England, he had not that shrewd understanding of his Scottish subjects, or of the lengths to which it was safe to go with them, which his father had never lost.

During the first years of his reign he was too much occupied with foreign wars and parliamentary disputes to visit Scotland. But even so, the trend of his policy made itself felt. He put no less than six of the Scottish bishops upon the Privy Council, to the exclusion of as many nobles. This naturally angered the nobles, they had been willing to aid James in setting up bishops to keep the Kirk in order, but if the bishops were to replace themselves it was another matter. Again, in order to find adequate endowments for the bishops, he announced the intention of revoking all grants of Church and Crown lands made since the beginning of Mary's reign, and of regaining for the Church the tithes which had largely passed into private hands—a compensation which fell far short of the value being paid to the actual possessors. The ultimate result of this was that the Church in Scotland, which had been more shamefully plundered by the nobles than any other Church, was placed in a sounder position than it had hitherto occupied, and this was true whether it was organised on an episcopal or a Presbyterian basis. But almost every landed family in Scotland was injuriously affected by the change. These two measures broke the alliance between the Crown and the nobles which had enabled James to establish his power, and made the nobles ready to throw themselves into opposition. And if the nobles and the Kirk united, they would be irresistible, unless the strength of England could be brought to bear upon them.

In 1633 Charles at last went to Edinburgh to be crowned. The full rites of the Church of England were followed in the coronation. To the horror of good Presbyterians, the bishops were dressed in full costume, there were candles, and an altar, and a crucifix—all sheer 'papisty,' in the eyes of rigid Scots. Two acts bearing on religion were at the same time forced through a packed Parliament—not without opposition—even the nobles drew up a protest, which Charles refused to accept. One of the Acts enforced the obnoxious Articles of Perth. The other required that all ministers should wear the surplice. Small matters, it might seem, but to nine Scots out of ten these were mere symbols of Rome. When Charles returned to England, he left a country convinced that he was the enemy of its faith. If Parliament had been sitting in England, there might—indeed, there would—have been some demonstration of sympathy with Scottish Puritanism in its troubles. But Parliament was in suspense, now and for seven years to come, the experiment of personal government was being tried, with apparent success, and England was prosperous and quiet. The Scots had to look to themselves. But their resistance was so effective that in a few years it not only baffled the king within Scotland itself but brought the toilsomely built fabric of his power in England tumbling to the ground.

Guided by Laud, now Archbishop of Canterbury and his chief adviser, Charles set himself systematically to perfect the work of transforming the Scottish Church which he had begun in 1633. In 1634 he set up by his own authority, and without consulting the Scottish Parliament or the General Assembly, a new High Commission Court, with far-reaching and inquisitorial powers, to enforce his will. In 1635, equally without consultation, he issued a large book of canons, by which the government and ritual of the Scottish Church were henceforth to be determined. Even James I had always maintained at least the semblance of consulting the General Assembly or the Parliament, or both. These disguises were now thrown aside. Moreover the contents of the canons amounted to a sweeping abrogation of the forms of worship instituted by John Knox, which had held then place through all the changes of recent years. Among other things the canons required the universal adoption of a liturgy which was not yet published, but which was promised for the following year. Royal autocracy could go no further.

The new liturgy, drawn up on the basis of the English prayer-book by a group of Scottish bishops, was universally attributed to Laud. It was fixed to be read for the first time on July 23, 1637, in the Church of St. Giles, Edinburgh, where Knox and Melville had often preached. Though all the dignitaries of Church and State were present, the attempt to read it produced a riot. The liturgy could not get a hearing in a single church in Edinburgh, and there was the same opposition in all parts of the country. Petitions poured in from all quarters, from parishes and presbyteries, from nobles and burgesses. Charles paid no regard to them. So high rose the tumult that in desperation the Scottish Privy Council agreed to the setting up of four 'Tables' or committees, representing the four classes of nobles, lairds, burgesses and ministers who had taken part in the petitions, in the hope that they would help to maintain order. When the four 'tables' agreed to establish a central 'table' consisting of representatives of each of them, the national resistance—for it was now no less—was equipped with a directing body. What is more, since the Privy Council found itself in practice impotent, the 'tables' rapidly became the only effective authority in the country. The Scots had shown themselves remarkably skilful in organising united resistance.

When the Tables sent to the king a supplication (Dec. 1637), asking for the recall of the canons and the liturgy and the removal of the bishops from the Privy Council, Charles' reply in a public proclamation was that the liturgy would not be withdrawn, that petitions against it were illegal, and that petitioners would be punished for treason. Such a pronouncement was of no avail against a united nation. The Tables proceeded to draw up a National Covenant, based upon a confession which had been drawn up in 1581 with the approval of the king's father, and full of denunciations of Rome. But to the confession was added an indictment of recent innovations and a solemn oath to defend true religion and the Crown. True religion, as the Scots conceived it, was in danger only from the Crown; the double allegiance could not be maintained.

The National Covenant was opened to public signature in Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh. So great were the crowds who came to sign it that it had to be taken out to a flat tombstone in the churchyard. Men signed it weeping, some signed it with their own blood, the most moving scenes accompanied the ceremony not only in

Edinburgh but in every parish of Scotland. Against such a resolution of a united nation no resistance could avail, unless it were backed by overwhelming force. And overwhelming force Charles could not wield, without appealing to the English Parliament for money. He could only temporise. He sent the Marquis of Hamilton to represent him: 'I give you leave to flatter them with what hopes you will . . . your chief end being how to save time . . . until I be ready to suppress them.'

The demand of the Tables now was for the summons of a free Assembly and a free Parliament to regularise their hitherto unconstitutional proceedings. The more important of these was the General Assembly, since it was the more completely representative of the nation, and supreme in Church matters by law. After much wriggling Charles had to yield with a bad grace, and to permit a General Assembly to meet at Glasgow on November 21, 1638; only safeguarding himself by declaring the illegality of all its proceedings unless the bishops were present—they had all fled in dismay to England, save four who had recanted.

The General Assembly of Glasgow deserves to rank among the great assemblies of the world; for it began a revolution which only ended with the establishment of the doctrine of popular sovereignty in the islands, and consequently in the whole British Commonwealth, and ultimately throughout the world. It was the most democratic and the most representative national body which had ever yet met. In every Scottish parish the minister and one lay elder were elected to the Presbytery; and from every Presbytery three ministers and a lay elder were sent to sit in the Assembly. The ministers were the intellectual and spiritual leaders of the nation; the lay elders included the ablest and best men of all the educated classes. To defy the decisions of such a body was dangerous indeed.

They were bold and unflinching decisions. First of all, the bishops were indicted. By the king's orders they refused to appear or to recognise the jurisdiction of an Assembly in which they did not sit as members; and on this ground, when the Assembly asserted that as a legally constituted body it had a right to judge the bishops, the king's commissioner, Hamilton, declared it dissolved. But no attention was paid to the dissolution: the Assembly went on with its task. It abolished episcopacy. It abolished the Court of High Commission. It abolished the canons and the liturgy; and then, in one compre-

hensive act, it re-established the whole Presbyterian system, its kirk sessions in each parish, its presbyteries, its synods, its General Assembly, and ordained that schools should be set up in every parish at the public expense. 'We have cast down the walls of Jericho,' said the Moderator in his closing words, 'Let him that rebuildeth beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite.'

Against such a defiance there could be only one reply. The issue must be decided by arms, and both sides prepared for this event. But Charles had before him the task of subjugating a united and enthusiastic nation, a nation, moreover, which had a very competent government of its own, well obeyed everywhere. Charles had to scrape together an army as best he might, from trained bands of militia and pressed men, and he had no skilled captains to rely upon. The Scots carried out a general levy, which was responded to with enthusiasm. They were able to put its organisation in the hands of experienced soldiers who had been serving abroad, chief among them Alexander Leslie, a general of Gustavus Adolphus, who held the rank of field-marshal in Sweden. It was a well-disciplined and well-supplied army which took the field to meet Charles' disorderly and untrained troops. Had they fought a pitched battle, there could be no doubt of the result. The Covenanters took the principal castles with little difficulty. But the clash of arms never came. The Scottish leaders were eager for reconciliation; the king wanted time for a stronger blow, and a truce made at Berwick (June 1639) ended the First Bishops' War.

This was no solution of the problem. A second Bishops' War was bound to follow. But in the meantime, in order to equip himself with the means of fighting, Charles had been compelled after eleven years to meet the English Parliament once more, and from that moment the fortunes of the two kingdoms, and of Ireland as well, were so irrevocably intertwined, that the separate narrative of Scottish events must be here suspended. The Scots had compelled the raising in definite terms of the greatest issue of government that had yet been fought out in any of the nations of the world.

[Bagwell's *Ireland under the Stuarts* & Dunlop's articles in the *Cambridge Modern History* and C. L. Falkner *Illustrations of Irish History in the Seventeenth Century*. For Scotland, Hume Brown's and Andrew Lang's *Histories of Scotland*.]

CHAPTER V

PERSONAL GOVERNMENT AND ITS DOWNFALL

(A.D. 1629-1642)

§ I. *The Years of Personal Government*

IN the eyes of the king, and of many others, the conduct of the Petition of Right Parliament, especially in its second session, following on the conduct of its predecessors, seemed to show that efficient government and the maintenance of national honour could not be upheld in face of unceasing and often unreasonable parliamentary criticism. Charles therefore determined to carry on the government as long as possible without Parliament, and as this involved abstention from costly adventures, he patched up hasty treaties of peace with France in 1629 and with Spain in 1630, and gave up the attempt to afford direct assistance to the German Protestants. The Duke of Buckingham, who had for some years past been the evil genius of Charles and his father, had been assassinated at Portsmouth (Aug. 1628) by a half-mad lieutenant in the army, and the field was clear for a fresh start. Henceforth the king was his own chief minister, though he was deeply influenced by the ideas both of Laud and of Wentworth. During eleven years he had the opportunity of showing England what the character and effects of monarchical rule would be. He had no fixed intention of disregarding or overriding established laws, and he always strove to get legal authority for his acts. But circumstances forced him into measures which, at the very least, strained the meaning of the law in its accepted interpretation. His own arbitrary temper and impatience of contradiction led him on, and his chief councillors, the masterful Wentworth and the doctrinaire Laud, were not the best advisers. His principles of government were in truth fundamentally inconsistent with the idea of a 'limited' monarchy, submitting to the sovereignty of laws which it could not alter, and as this was the conception of the ill-defined English tradition which

most Englishmen accepted, the result was that he gradually alienated all the most powerful and reasonable elements in English life, and had to witness a bewilderingly sudden and complete collapse of the painfully reared fabric of his power as soon as the Scottish revolution forced him to throw himself upon English national feeling.

Yet during all these years (1629-1640) things seemed to be going favourably for the king. The country was peaceful and very prosperous. The steady development of trade with the West Indies, with India, and with the young American colonies was reflected in a great increase in the yield of the customs duties, which helped to relieve government from financial embarrassment; industry was stimulated by the demand for goods for export, and by the growing wealth and purchasing power of the country; agriculture too was thriving, and great reclamations of marshland in the Fen country, carried out with the king's help, added to the food supply. Wages, it is true, were low; but apart from this England had never known a more steady or a more widely diffused prosperity; and the burden of taxation was less than in any other country. The coming revolution was certainly not due to economic distress, or to any economic causes.

Still less was it due to 'oppression' or injustice felt by the people at large. The ordinary course of justice went on in the ordinary way. There were no rebellions or public disorders. The events of the period which fill the pages of the history books were mainly constitutional and ecclesiastical questions, fought out in the law courts. They seemed to arouse no widespread popular interest or opposition; and if some of the punishments inflicted upon extreme fanatics were cruelly severe, they were very few in number, and not so severe as the punishments which had been frequently inflicted in Elizabeth's time, and still more in Henry VIII.'s. No man lost his life for his opinions, as many had done in Elizabeth's reign. Apart from the irritation which may have been aroused in some quarters by Laud's zeal for external uniformity in Church matters, the ordinary life of the people was almost unaffected by the proceedings of government, and no excitement seems to have been caused by them, except among the more extreme Puritans, a small minority of the nation. What *was* caused by them was serious-minded discussion of the tendency of royal policy in Church and State, in a multitude of country houses and merchants' parlours. Charles

might reasonably feel that he was succeeding. What he failed to appreciate was a deep change which had long been taking place in the mind and temper of the most important sections of the nation.

It was a change which had been gradually coming about since the later years of Elizabeth. The mere existence of the nation, which had then seemed to be imperilled, was safe; and therefore the passion and thrill of national feeling which that danger had aroused, the eager and adventurous spirit to which it had given rise, and the intoxicating sense of triumph which followed victory were being replaced by a more sober and reflective mood. You can see one aspect of this change in the contrast between the exultant daring of the Elizabethan sea-dogs, and the more businesslike enterprises of the traders and colonists which we have already described. Another aspect is displayed in the literature of the time. The great dramatic literature, full of passion and the pride of life, which was the glory of Elizabeth's time, lasted on through the reign of James I with not much diminished brilliance. Then, almost suddenly, it came to an end. It did not merely change its style or form: it came to an end, and there is scarcely a parallel in literature to the existence of an outburst so brilliant creating no continuous tradition. In its place came a period of reflective poetry, and of philosophic prose, deeply concerned about the problems of life and conduct. As always happens, the one movement began before the other ended, and the change of note was already visible (for example) in the restrained and grave beauty of Shakespeare's last plays, the *Winter's Tale*, the *Tempest* and *Cymbeline*. The characteristic poets of the next period were men like Donne, George Herbert, Crashaw, Cowley, Milton and Andrew Marvell. They had not lost the love of beauty—they would not be poets if they had. But theirs was a graver and more austere delight; there is in such a poem as *L'Allegro* nothing of that fierce passion for colour and form, that drunkenness with fine words, which you find in Shakespeare's early poems. Even the writers of delicate love poems share the note: the man who wrote 'I could not love thee, dear, so much, loved I not honour more,' was a Cavalier lyricist. And the same change in temper might equally be illustrated from manners and costume. Dignity and a sober richness are the characteristics that strike one, whether in the painted portraits of Vandyke (who got much patronage in England) or in the

written character studies like Mrs Lucy Hutchinson's beautiful and endearing description of her husband ¹

This reflective, sober, self-restrained temper was deeply exercised by great problems of government and religion It was a law-abiding temper, not ready for hot-headed revolt In the sphere of politics it expressed itself in a remarkable development of historical learning, devoted especially to the study of the antiquities of English institutions, and in the extraordinary reverence for precedents displayed by the parliaments of the age But it was especially in religious questions that the new spirit was exhibited This was the age not merely of Puritanism at its best, but of much noble and beautiful thinking and writing upon the other, or Anglo-Catholic, side of the great controversy Most of the poets named above were of the Anglo-Catholic school They found in the Anglican way a real *via media* between extremes on either hand, a mode of retaining beauty and dignity, and of reconciling freedom with order William Laud, though in some of his methods he went beyond what the best minds of his party would have desired, did nevertheless speak for a real and powerful body of honest thought and feeling

But undeniably the dominant thought of the time was Puritan All England had been reading the Bible in the noble Authorised Version, and very many Englishmen were ready to find in it an all-sufficient rule of life, apt to be obscured by insistence upon traditions and ceremonies This does not mean that the majority of Englishmen were enamoured of the more extreme Puritan theories, that they wished to abolish bishops, sweep away the prayer-book and carry out the religious change with the logical thoroughness of their Scottish neighbours That school of thought had indeed a considerable following, especially in London and the towns, from which it always drew its main strength, but it was a small minority in the nation What is meant by the assertion that the dominant thought of the time was Puritan is that there was a widespread and growing impatience with many of the proceedings of the bishops and with the emphasis which prelates of the Laudian school seemed to lay upon forms and ceremonies, that there was a desire to encourage the preaching of good doctrine, and anger at the closing of the mouths of preachers, and that there was a growing gravity of life, a tendency to disapprove the

¹ *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, a book which gives a picture of the Puritan spirit at its best

gaieties and recklessness in which the Elizabethans rejoiced. This, as much as anything, accounts for the decay of the drama ; though few of the more respectable Puritans would have endorsed the reckless and foul-mouthed imprecations against all plays and players in which fanatics like Prynne indulged.

The essence of Puritanism consists in the sense of direct and personal responsibility to an austere God . in the belief that a man's duty is to live 'as ever in his great Task-master's eye' And when such a view of life becomes widespread in a nation, as it was widespread in seventeenth-century England, very great results are apt to follow. There may be long restraint, long hesitation about helping to produce a disturbance of settled order, but when the time comes there will be unbending severity. For this, it should be remembered, was not an age in which toleration was accounted anything but a weakness, though in some quarters the spirit of tolerance was beginning to raise its head. Most of the Puritans were anything but tolerant . to be indulgent to wrong in any form, wrong thinking equally with wrong action, was in their eyes a crime . And there was one form of 'error' for which toleration was specially unthinkable. The fierce hatred of Rome, which descended from the days of national peril, was even stronger than ever. Nothing so much discredited Charles and the bishops as the suspicion that they were inclined to be lenient to Rome.

Unconscious, as it was natural that he should be, of these deeper currents of national life, Charles had every ground to be pleased with the external evidences of order, prosperity and content which lasted throughout his period of personal government. During these years the country was almost in the happy condition of having no history , and it is only in the light of after events that the working of the causes which prepared the coming catastrophe is perceptible. From this point of view three groups of events deserve attention. One was the ecclesiastical policy of Laud, and the mode in which it was carried out. The second was the remarkable movement of emigration to the New World, which was the answer of Puritanism to Laud, and in which, during these years, Puritanism found its chief expression. The third was the financial expedients to which the king was reduced, and the constitutional issues raised by them. These three distinct series of events were all closely connected. They combined to prepare placid and law-abiding

England to play its part in the revolution which was meanwhile brewing in Ireland and in Scotland.

§ 2. *The Aims and Methods of Laud.*

William Laud,¹ fifty-two years old and Bishop of London at the beginning of the period, became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633, and was not only the king's chief adviser in Church matters, but one of the principal members of the Privy Council, an advocate of the highest view of the royal prerogative, and the king's most trusted friend. He was not in the strict sense a persecutor; he held no inquisitions into men's consciences as the Puritans did in Scotland and America, and the Catholics in many countries. But he was the head of one party in the Church, and that probably not the most widely supported in the country, though it counted now the larger part of the clergy among its adherents. He did not punish men for holding Puritanical opinions, otherwise than by denying them preferment. But on three points he held strong views, and took strong action to maintain them. He was determined to maintain the authority of the bishops and the royal supremacy over the Church; he was eager to introduce external uniformity in Church services; and, like all other statesmen of that age, he believed in restraining public discussion of vexed questions, especially by those with whom he did not agree, or who challenged, and by challenging endangered, the existing order in Church and State. He had immense industry and perseverance, an instinct for order, and a genuine zeal for his work. Nobody ever suggested, even in the bitter controversy of that age, that he was not absolutely above corruption. But he had a high temper and an overbearing manner, and did not easily brook contradiction.

He carried out a very thorough visitation of the churches, and insisted upon the observance of his rules of order. There was some opposition, but very little, and he got his way. Perhaps the point upon which there was most complaint was his demand that the communion-table should be placed at the east end of the church, and not in the centre, where the congregation often used it as a convenient place for their hats. The enforcement of this rule cannot be called severe persecution. More serious, he refused to permit the appointment as preachers of parsons not holding benefices,

¹ There is a good short biography of Laud, by W. H. Hutton.

according to a practice very common in London and other Puritan towns, where Puritan preachers, denied preferment, were often appointed to Sunday afternoon lectureships. He took very seriously the censorship of the press, which had been a function of the Church since Elizabeth's time, and promised whipping and the pillory to any one but the few licensed printers who should venture to issue books in London. This was, of course, a grave interference with freedom of discussion. But it was quite in accordance with precedent and with the accepted view of government's duties. A similar course would have been followed by a Puritan ecclesiastic.

It was, however, the method in which his regulations were enforced which aroused most indignation. They were enforced through the High Commission Court and the Star Chamber, 'prerogative' courts which had descended from the Tudors. These courts, originally created for the purpose of making the royal authority effective, did not administer the ordinary law of the land: they enforced the executive edicts of the Crown; they largely used their own discretion both in their methods of procedure and in the penalties which they imposed. They had been useful under the Tudors as a means of dealing with offenders and offences before which the common law was ineffective; but the nation had now outgrown the need for them. It was in reality for that reason, and not because they were employed more unscrupulously than the Tudors had used them, that the new generation found them objectionable. Some of the penalties which these courts imposed were ferocious. William Prynne, an acrid Puritan lawyer, for a learned, virulent, foul-mouthed book against the stage, in which he reflected on the king and queen, was sentenced to pay a fine of £5000, to be set in the pillory, to have his ears cut off, and to be imprisoned for life; the same Prynne, together with a clergyman, Burton, and a doctor, Bastwick, later received a similar sentence; Alexander Leighton, for writing a furious book against bishops and against the king's policy, was fined £10,000, was set in the pillory, was whipped and had an ear cut off, and was then imprisoned for life. These were horrible sentences. But Tudor parallels could be found, and there were few cases so bad as these. It was right that such barbarities should be condemned and prevented for the future; but neither Laud nor the courts in which his influence was so great originated this kind of ferocity. The real objection at

the time to Laud's proceedings was that he was using his authority to forward a cause from which his critics differed, though it should be added that a growing sense of moderation and decency was leading men to condemn many things which had left them unmoved a generation or two earlier

§ 3 *The Puritan Emigration*

The ascendancy of Laud and of the Anglo-Catholic party convinced the more fervid Puritans that they had now little chance of imposing their own austere conceptions of life upon the whole English community, or of turning England into a Bible Commonwealth such as they had dreamed of. The moment at which this conviction was forced upon them is pretty clearly marked. It was the moment when the Petition of Right Parliament was dissolved, after making a violent protest against the favours shown to the Laudian school. Those who wished to live in a Bible Commonwealth must now, it would seem, seek outside England the opportunity of realising their dreams. The successful establishment of the little colony at Plymouth pointed the way, and in 1629 a group of Puritan leaders resolved to imitate the Pilgrim Fathers, and to found a plantation on a larger scale wherein Puritan modes of life should be strictly observed. It cannot be said that these men were driven out by any severe persecution. They wished neither to be tolerated nor to tolerate. They were a loyal and law-abiding folk who wanted to live in a Bible Commonwealth where all would follow the same austere rules of life, and since they could not fashion England after their will, they went out to make a new society in the wilderness, still remaining loyal Englishmen and enjoying the rights and liberties of Englishmen.

In 1628 the Council for New England, on behalf of the king, had made a large grant of land to a company known as the Company of Massachusetts Bay. Like the Virginia Company before it, it was given by its charter large powers of government over settlers within its limits. Many of the subscribers to this company were Puritans, and this made it easy for the group of leading Puritans who were planning the creation of a Bible Commonwealth to get control over the company, and to use its chartered powers for their own purposes. As the leading members of the company themselves intended to settle in its territory, it was easy to transfer its administrative headquarters to the settlement itself; thus the forms of a trading company could be used

as the means of securing for the intended colony a remarkable degree of independence and of freedom from external control as well as a formal legal standing, to which the law-abiding Puritan attached great weight. The leading spirit in this remarkable enterprise was John Winthrop, a Suffolk squire, a lawyer and a Cambridge graduate, who became the first governor of the company and of the colony, and remained throughout his life its dominating figure. A man of great practical wisdom, he was also very much of an autocrat; and his aristocratic prejudices were almost as strong as his Puritan convictions.

In 1630 a fleet of eleven ships, carefully organised, took out some 2000 settlers, who established themselves in and around Boston—not without friction with some earlier settlers who had planted themselves in the same region. Though there were some hardships in the first year, the colony was successful from the first. No plantation had ever been so carefully organised; and supplies were abundant because the leaders of the expedition were men of substance and education, grave and solid men, not mere adventurers. During the following years there was a continuous stream of Puritan emigrants: in 1634, we are told, ten or twelve ships full of emigrants came into Boston every month. By 1642 (when the outbreak of the Civil War checked the stream) there were no less than 18,000 inhabitants in Massachusetts, a population greater than that of all the other American colonies combined; and this leaves out of account the settlers in the other Puritan colonies which, as we shall see, were being simultaneously founded. What is more, a very large proportion of the emigrants were men of substance, who were not driven from England by poverty, or by any other motive than religious zeal. At one moment Oliver Cromwell almost joined them; and Sir Harry Vane, Cromwell's later rival, actually dwelt for a time in the Bible Commonwealth.

This was a very striking exodus, which might have been regarded with alarm in England. At that period every government held that it had a right to control the movements of its subjects. But Charles I. placed no obstacles in the way of the Puritan emigration. One fleet bound for Boston was, indeed, held up for a time; but apart from this there was no interference. Charles was no doubt glad to be rid of troublesome folk. But at least his attitude was not that of a persecutor; it stands in marked contrast with the policy of Louis XIV., who would allow none but

orthodox Catholics to go to Canada. If Englishmen, whether Puritans or Laudians, had not yet learnt to regard religious freedom as desirable, at least the idea was coming to birth that within the same commonwealth, and under the same flag, there was room for communities of widely different types. To that extent Charles I and Laud were ready for toleration. Winthrop himself was told by members of the Privy Council, 'that his Majesty did not intend to impose the ceremonies of the Church of England upon us, for that it was the freedom from such things that made people come over to us.'

From the first the new colony was not only prosperous, but was left extraordinarily free to manage its own affairs. It recognised the supremacy of the English Crown. It claimed to enjoy the inherited liberties of Englishmen, and enforced in its courts the Common Law of England. Its title to its lands was derived from a royal grant and it recognised the territorial limits defined in its charter. Its government depended upon the powers granted by the charter, which continued in force down to the Revolution. Massachusetts was ruled by the 'Governor, Assistants and Freemen of the Massachusetts Bay Company.' At first these formed a close oligarchy, there were, to begin with, only twelve freemen, who exercised, in theory absolute control over the rest. Other freemen were admitted only with the consent of the original group, which was sparingly given. In 1631 it was laid down that only members of approved churches were eligible as freemen, but this by no means meant that all church members were entitled to the freedom. The object of the provision was to ensure that the character of the Bible Commonwealth should not be disturbed. Nobody could describe early Massachusetts as a democracy. It was a strictly limited aristocracy. It represented that 'rule of the saints' which was later attempted in England, but the saints had to be of respectable station in life.

In local affairs there was a nearer approach to democracy. Each township, having its church as its centre, was governed by the free voices of all the church members. And gradually this system liberalised the central government of the colony. The practice came to be that all church members were entitled to be present, in person or by proxy, at the 'General Court,' wherein the freemen of the company elected its officers and laid down its rules. Out of this a representative system was to grow. But it had not yet

come into being during the period with which we are concerned ; the colony was still governed by a small oligarchy. It was not as the model of a free state, but as the model of a Bible Commonwealth, that Massachusetts was to influence the course of the discussion in England.

In several respects the new Puritan colony was one of the best-ordered societies in the world. Its people were prosperous and enterprising ; besides cultivating the soil, they soon began to take to fishing and trading. The colony enjoyed peace, being little troubled by the Indians, who were on the whole fairly treated. It was from the first an educated community : there was a school in every township, and in a very few years the beginnings of a University were made at Cambridge—so called in honour of the *alma mater* of most of the colonial leaders. The keen interest of the people in theological subjects made them (like the Scots) intellectually acute. But Massachusetts was a hard and intolerant community, very far indeed from being a centre of spiritual freedom. It had no love of freedom or variety : its view was that men ought to be compelled to live austere according to a strait rule ; and as it forbade freedom of thought, so it banned the levity of art and of joy. None but Puritans would dream of going to Massachusetts. Yet several groups of Puritans who went there were forced to flee into the wilderness, because they differed from the dominant creed ; and when, at a later date, a handful of Quakers arrived in Boston, three of them, two men and a woman, were hanged.

Thus there was being erected in New England a model of the Puritan conception of a well-ordered state. Beyond question this community had strength, courage and ideals ; it fostered and loved political, if not religious, freedom ; and its establishment was an enrichment of the variety of the nascent commonwealth of free peoples.

Massachusetts and its modest older neighbour, Plymouth, did not long stand alone. In 1631 a group of leading English Puritans, including Lord Saye and Sele, Lord Brooke, John Hampden and John Pym, obtained from the Council for New England a vague but extensive grant of land south of Massachusetts, to which the first settlers went out in 1633. This was the beginning of the colony of Connecticut.¹ A group of voluntary exiles from Massachusetts later (1635) settled in the valley of the Connecticut

¹ See the map of New England, Atlas, Plate 54 (b).

river; and these two groups, without any formal authorisation from the Crown, set up a system of government for themselves. In 1638 another group of Puritan exiles from England established themselves at New Haven, on the Connecticut coast. They were perhaps the most rigid of the emigrants, and for a long time—indeed, until 1662—they held themselves aloof from the Connecticut settlements which surrounded them.

Meanwhile the intolerance of Massachusetts had driven some of its inhabitants to take refuge in the wilderness. Three distinct groups of these refugees found their way to Rhode Island and the adjoining shores of Narragansett Bay between 1636 and 1638, they combined to form the colony of Rhode Island, which, like Connecticut, was a 'squatter' colony, not authorised by any formal charter. From the first the most distinctive feature of Rhode Island was that, in accordance with the principles of Roger Williams, one of its founders, it refused to interfere with the religious opinions or practices of individual settlers, and for that reason it was regarded with distrust and dislike by the more orthodox Puritan colonies.

There had thus been created, before the acute conflict began in England, a remarkable group of thriving settlements in the block of land which lies between the Hudson and the Atlantic. The tiny original settlement of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth still maintained its distinct existence. Massachusetts was solidly organised, was growing rich and strong, and dominated its neighbours. Connecticut was fighting strenuously with the Indians and wiping out the Pequot tribe. New Haven was living apart in rigid orthodoxy. The outcasts of Rhode Island were raising the standard of religious freedom. Meanwhile, further north, small settlements had been established by Sir Ferdinando Gorges and the Council for New England, in New Hampshire and on the coast of Maine. In 1643 Massachusetts took the lead in organising a federation of this group of settlements, for common defence against the Dutch and the Indians. The federation lasted for some years, but it was never very effective, because the lesser colonies distrusted Massachusetts and feared her domination. But what was most significant about the federation was its omissions. Neither Maine nor Rhode Island was admitted. Rhode Island ('that sink') was unorthodox: 'we have no conversing with them, nor desire to have'. As for Maine, not only had that settlement admitted an

excommunicated minister; it had conferred office on a tailor, which outraged the pride of aristocratic Massachusetts. As in England, so in the New World, the various groups of Puritans did not find it easy to co-operate. Puritanism, just because of its vitality, was apt to be a disruptive creed.

The remarkable group of New England colonies was not the only achievement of the period of personal government. Roman Catholics were persecuted in England far more seriously than Puritans. In 1632 it occurred to a Roman Catholic peer, Lord Baltimore, to imitate the Puritans by finding in the New World a place of refuge for his co-religionists, where they could follow their own convictions without interference, while still remaining under the English flag. He obtained from Charles I a grant of land on Chesapeake Bay, immediately to the north of Virginia, and gave to it the name of Maryland,¹ in honour of the queen (1632).

Maryland was the first 'proprietary' colony, its governor being appointed by the proprietor, subject to the king's approval, while the proprietor also had the right to dispose of lands. But the charter granted to Lord Baltimore by Charles I provided that no laws should be passed without the assent of the freemen of the colony, a provision which made Maryland a far more democratic community than Massachusetts. Another feature of this colony distinguished it from its predecessors. Though it was started largely to provide a place of refuge for Roman Catholics, who were freely permitted to go to it, the majority of the settlers were always Anglican Protestants, and the Anglican Church was the established church of the colony. But toleration was granted not only to Roman Catholics but to other sects. Maryland was for a long time one of the few places in the world where in the intolant seventeenth century, religious freedom existed.

We have dwelt in some detail upon the remarkable group of colonies founded in these years, for two reasons. In the first place the work of these years went far to fix the character of the British Commonwealth. It determined that a remarkable variety of type was to be not merely permitted but encouraged within the limits of the Commonwealth. It determined also that political liberty and the practice of self-government were to be characteristic of the British

¹ See the map, Atlas, Plate 54 (c)

lands. Finally, in two instances, Maryland and Rhode Island, a real system of religious toleration had been attained, and this also was to be, in the future, one of the characteristics of all the British plantations. Charles I and his government certainly deserve a share of the credit for these things, though it cannot be contended that they deliberately planned them. They encouraged variety of type in the new lands, instead of trying to force them all into a single mould, they permitted in New England, and ordained in Maryland, the creation of self governing institutions, and, at the least, they placed no obstacle in the way of the growth of religious toleration. In colonial matters, at any rate, the government of Charles I was no tyranny, it made real contributions to the growth of a commonwealth of free and different societies.

Yet more important was the bearing of these events upon the vital conflict of ideals and principles which was soon to be renewed in the islands.

It is clear that the activity of the Puritan leaders in colonisation partly accounts for the deceptive quietude of England during the eleven years of personal government. The Puritan enthusiasts had found a field in which their ideals could be put into practice. On the other hand the success of these experiments encouraged them when the time came, to bold action in England. Perhaps it also stimulated those who thought differently to resistance, for what appeared as a model to one temper might well seem like a warning to another. The ideal of a Bible Commonwealth had been proved to be not impracticable. Just as the spectacle of triumphant democracy in America stimulated the French in the eighteenth century, to put into operation the theories of Rousseau and thus helped to bring about the French Revolution, so the spectacle of the Bible Commonwealths of the New World stimulated the Puritans of England and thus helped to bring about the Puritan Revolution. During the years which preceded the meeting of the Long Parliament Puritans in England were co-operating in the organisation of colonial schemes, and discussing problems of Church and State, which these schemes suggested. There was increasing intercourse between the old and the new England. And when the conflict came, many colonists, filled with the fervour of the pioneer, hurried back to play their part in it.

§ 4. *Ship Money and its Significance.*

In the long debate which led to the Civil War and the Revolution of 1649, there were always two elements, a religious element and a constitutional element. The religious element was predominant in the migrations which we have just examined, as it was also in the Scottish troubles which were going on during the same years. Between 1629 and the meeting of the Long Parliament the discussion of the constitutional problem was largely in abeyance. But towards the end of this period it was raised in a very vital way by the fiscal devices to which the king was driven.

The necessity of finding a revenue forced the king to employ every possible means of raising funds to which a legal colour could be given. He still, of course, collected tonnage and poundage: the Petition of Right had not definitely prohibited this, and, though Parliament had not passed the customary Act, the view of the Crown lawyers was that, as these duties were the ancient right of the Crown and had not been prohibited, no act was necessary. An ingenious mode of raising money by 'distraint of knight-hood' was invented in 1630. Edward I. had forced land-owners to take up knighthood or pay a fine because he wanted fighting men; the use of this device solely for the purpose of getting the fines was formally legal, but none the less was an irritating abuse. Equally irritating was the revival of ancient claims to forest jurisdiction for purposes of exaction.

But beyond comparison the most famous of these devices was ship-money. Kings in time of war had long exercised the right of calling upon maritime counties either to contribute ships or to pay an equivalent in cash. Being anxious to strengthen the fleet, Charles in 1634 required the maritime counties to provide ships bigger than any of them (save London) possessed, or to pay an equivalent. The demand was made in time of peace; moreover, it might be fairly held to fall under the heading of the taxation prohibited by the Petition of Right; but the lawyers, or some of them, decided that it was legal, and the money was successfully raised. Next year, though there was no war or danger of war, the tax was repeated, and imposed on inland as well as maritime counties. Ten out of twelve judges declared that the tax might be rightfully levied from the whole kingdom if the kingdom was in danger, of which

the king must be sole judge. Again the money was raised, though there were more protests. It is fair to note that it was all spent upon the fleet, which became more efficient than it had hitherto been, and did some good work, releasing three hundred captives from the pirates of Morocco.

In 1636 a third levy was announced. Evidently the new tax was intended to be, not an exceptional thing to meet a national danger, but a regular source of revenue: even if it were all used on the fleet, it would proportionately relieve the exchequer. John Hampden, a wealthy Buckinghamshire squire, resolved to resist, not by violence—Hampden's case has been sometimes most improperly used as a justification for resistance to the law of the land—but in the only legal way open to him: by refusing to pay on the ground that the tax was illegal, and thus challenging the issue in the law courts. The sum demanded from him was only 20s., which shows both that the actual burden of the tax was by no means oppressive, and that the resistance was purely one of principle. In a great State trial (1637), the subject was argued with immense learning on both sides. The verdict given by the whole bench of judges went against Hampden by seven votes to five. Some of the judges in their judgments spoke the language of pure absolutism, asserting that Acts of Parliament to take away the king's power to defend his kingdom were void. But it is to the credit of the bench that five judges risked the loss of their livelihood by pronouncing for Hampden. It is characteristic of seventeenth-century England that a profound constitutional issue should thus be fought out in the law courts, and that the decision of the judges should be loyally accepted until such time as the law could be altered.

But behind the ship-money case lay issues of the highest constitutional import. Where were the powers of Parliament, and what became of the liberties of England, if the king could levy such a tax even after the Petition of Right? What security was there for the continued maintenance of the laws (which Charles had hitherto observed, even if he had strained them) if even the judges of the realm were to declare that no Act of Parliament could make any difference to the king's prerogative, and were to act on that doctrine? These doubts and misgivings found echoes in a thousand manor-houses where the precedents of liberty were known and valued. There was no open resistance and very little protest; but the mind of the nation, or of the educated part of it, was being made up.

And meanwhile the king, encouraged by success, was inevitably hardening in his view of his royal rights and the wicked unreason of parliamentary restriction; and Laud was preaching the Divine Right of the Lord's Anointed; and in Ireland, Wentworth,¹ fully master of the realm, was building up an army. Also he was writing to his friend Laud, to urge that the ship-money precedent ought to be used as a proof that the king must have a similar power 'to raise payments for land forces'; he was urging that a foreign campaign thus financed would keep England quiet—the unfailing argument of arbitrary governments. 'This piece,'—ship-money—he argued, 'well-fortified, for ever vindicates the royalty at home from under the conditions and restraints of subjects.' English political liberty was indeed in danger, despite the careful legality which Charles and his advisers had hitherto observed.

§ 5. *The Collapse of Personal Government and the Definition of Limited Monarchy.*

Within a few months of the decision in the ship-money case the Scots were in arms, and Charles was helpless before them. He had made a truce; but he must have forces to make face against the Scots, unless he was to lose all power over his northern kingdom. Two alternatives lay before him: to defy the law openly; or to summon Parliament and ask for funds. Wentworth, now created Lord Strafford, advised the summons of Parliament. He believed in the value of Parliament as a means of feeling the pulse of the nation, provided it was not permitted to hamper the executive government, and he had always hoped that the time would come when it would be safe to summon it again. This seemed a good moment. National feeling, he hoped, would be stirred by the Scottish danger: here was the war with which he had hoped to distract opinion. And he knew that he could (as he actually did) get a handsome grant from the Irish Parliament, which was to meet first, and would give a good example. He did not realise how deep was the distrust of the king's aims in England; nor see that to many Englishmen the Scots appeared to be fighting for a cause that was their own. So Parliament was summoned; and Eliot's companions in prison, who had pined there since 1629, were released to make a good impression.

¹ There is a good short biography of Wentworth (Strafford), by H. D. Traill.

But the new Parliament (April 1640) contained the old leaders; foremost among them John Pym, the practised political strategist, with him John Hampden, the hero of the ship-money case, quiet on the back benches a Puritan squire from Huntingdon, Oliver Cromwell¹ They were asked for supplies for the Scottish war they answered that they knew not whether they had any money to give until then liberties were secure Within three weeks the breach was final, and the 'Short' Parliament was dissolved, while excited mobs in London threatened to sack Laud's palace and released rioters from prison

But the Scottish war had to be carried on Somehow or other, by desperate devices—among them the issue of debased coinage—money was raised even Spain was asked in vain for help But the troops who could be got together were untrained, undisciplined, and full of discontent, while the Scots were fully prepared The Scottish army crossed the border a feeble attempt was made to resist them at Newburn on the Tyne Newcastle had to be abandoned, and the Scots occupied all Northumberland and Durham Halting there, they presented a petition to the king for the redress of their grievances and the summons of an English Parliament, twelve English peers also sent up a similar petition In desperation Charles summoned at York a meeting of English peers to see if they would help him But the best they could do was to negotiate with the Scots The Scots would grant an armistice if the expenses of their army were paid, at the rate of £25,000 a month But where was the money to be got in addition to the money for the English troops which still had to be kept on foot? There was no way out of it A new Parliament was summoned, and held its first meeting on 3rd November 1640 It was the famous Long Parliament

The meeting of the Long Parliament is one of the great dates in the history of free institutions For its members—practised men of affairs, most of them, and some with long parliamentary experience of dealing with the king—came together with a clear recognition that what they had to do was not merely to record and defend ancient precedents and privileges, but in effect to define in an unmistakable way the powers of Parliament and its relations with the Crown, and to do away once for all with the ambiguities

¹ The best of the many biographies of Cromwell is by C. H. Firth in the *Heroes of the Nations Series*

of precedent, which had enabled the king to carry on government in his own way during the last eleven years. On this main issue there was in effect no division among them. So far as this was concerned, there was practically no king's party at all. The early proceedings of the Long Parliament were the work of the united representatives of a united nation.

The first and most sensational task which they undertook was the removal and punishment of the chief agents of the recent system of government. On a message from the House of Commons that a charge of high treason was to be laid against Strafford by the process of impeachment, the Lords ordered his imprisonment pending his trial; Laud was similarly dealt with; the Secretary of State only escaped by fleeing to France, and the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, who as Chief Justice had presided in Hampden's case, by fleeing to Holland.

It was the prolonged trial and subsequent attainder of Strafford which held the public eye; to it we must return. Meanwhile the problem of the Scots had to be dealt with: they were paid maintenance allowance until the questions at issue between them and the king should be settled. But only the king himself could settle them. He did so during a visit to Scotland which Parliament, very unwillingly, allowed him to make in August 1641. He had, of course, no alternative but to give way on every point, and to accept the results of the Scottish revolution. But he used the opportunity to get into touch with a party of Scottish peers, headed by the Earl of Montrose,¹ who were discontented with the leadership of the Earl of Argyll and the ministers. There was, indeed, a large body of opinion in Scotland which was eager to make friends with the king, once the Kirk was established, and this was to have important future consequences. In the meanwhile, the suspicion that Charles was making a Scottish party for himself did not increase the friendliness of the parliamentarian leaders.

But the main business of the Long Parliament was neither the settlement of Scotland (which was not directly their business) nor even the impeachment of Strafford; it was the definition of the English constitution; and this was effected in a very important series of measures during the

¹ There is a good little life of the gallant and chivalrous Montrose, by Mowbray Morns, in the *English Men of Action Series*, and a longer one by C. S. Terry.

autumn of 1640 and in the course of 1641. To all these measures Charles I had no alternative but to yield, though he did so in many cases with the worst possible grace. Taking them in a logical rather than a chronological order, in the first place, a *Triennial Act* (Feb 1641) provided that Parliament should be summoned at least once in every three years: if three years elapsed without a meeting the Lord Chancellor must summon one without waiting for the king's orders; if he failed the sheriffs must hold the elections. Government without Parliament was henceforth to be impossible. In the second place, all the special prerogative courts of the Tudor period—Star Chamber, High Commission Court, Council of the North, Council of Wales—were abolished outright (1641). Henceforth the ordinary law of the land must suffice: England, unlike other European countries even to this day, must do without special administrative courts for the maintenance of the authority of government. In the third place, the Tonnage and Poundage Act (1641) declared it illegal to levy any customs duties without parliamentary grant, while another Act formally declared the illegality of ship-money, distraint of knighthood, and forest exactions. These Acts, taken in conjunction with the Petition of Right, ensured that henceforth all taxation whatsoever, direct or indirect should be controlled by Parliament. All these enactments passed through both houses without demur, and Charles had no choice but to accept them.

This was the most permanent and the most valuable part of the work of the Long Parliament, and it was done during the Parliament's first year. It outlasted all the revolutionary changes of the next eighteen years, and was accepted without question as the framework of the English constitution at the Restoration. But it was far more than a mere restatement of precedents. It was a whole constitution, the first clear definition of a limited parliamentary monarchy in history. It left the Crown still responsible for the conduct of executive government and for the appointment of ministers, holding very much the position of the President in the constitution of the United States. But the Crown must always now work in co-operation with Parliament, especially because without Parliament it could not obtain the necessary means for carrying on government even in times of peace. And the Crown must accept, and act within the terms of, the common law of the land, modified only by such changes as Parliament might intro-

duce: there were no longer to be any special jurisdictions or prerogative courts outside the ordinary course of law. Here, indeed, was a clear definition of the fundamentals of a free constitution.

§ 6. *The Cleavage of Parties, and the Drift towards Civil War.*

On the main constitutional question practically the whole Parliament was united. But already divergences of view were beginning to appear, and two parties were shaping themselves. Events move rapidly in a time of revolution. Within fifteen months of the opening of the Long Parliament the parties were so clearly marked that civil war had become inevitable, within two years it had broken out.

The impeachment of Strafford began the rise of a feeling favourable to the king. The Commons had been agreed as to the necessity of removing the one man of great power and vigour upon whom the king could rely; and they had been agreed as to procedure by impeachment on a charge of high treason, on the ground that the accused had endeavoured to subvert 'the ancient fundamental laws' of England, and to introduce an arbitrary and tyrannical form of government. But difficulties soon arose. The English law of treason limited this crime to 'levying war against the king': it knew nothing of treason to the nation to which the king might be a party. The House of Lords, as the judicial body before whom the charge was laid, was bound to administer the law, and nothing but the law. The Commons tried to buttress their case by producing Sir Henry Vane's notes of the proceedings at a meeting of the Privy Council, when Strafford had said 'You have an army in Ireland that you may employ to reduce this kingdom to obedience.' But this was weak evidence. Vane's notes might be inaccurate. 'This kingdom' might be Scotland. Even if it was England, was this 'levying war against the king'? Moreover, Strafford's defence, conducted under great difficulties, had been extraordinarily eloquent and effective, and had aroused much sympathy. The impeachment seemed likely to break down. The leaders of the Commons decided to proceed by the swifter method of an Act of Attainder, which amounted to a condemnation without trial. But there was substantial opposition even in the Commons to the use of this weapon—a weapon of tyranny, hunted out from among the bad precedents of the Wars of the Roses, and much used by Henry VIII. Rancour was driving the

advocates of the Reign of Law into dangerous courses. But they persisted. Charles in vain tried to save his friend by promising never to employ him again in any public office. the Act of Attainder, sentencing Strafford to death, was passed, and awaited the king's signature (May 1641).

With a noble self-sacrifice Strafford advised him to sign, and after an agonising day he did so. For the degradation of his surrender he never forgave himself, on the scaffold he referred to it as justifying God's dealings with him, and he never forgave the parliamentary leaders. Strafford went to his doom (12th May) with a pious courage which men could not but admire, and as he passed the house where Laud was imprisoned, the archbishop, who knew his turn must come, stood at a window with his hands raised in benediction. The vindictiveness of Strafford's punishment, in the eyes of many men, put the parliamentary leaders in the wrong. Their excuse was that so long as Strafford lived they were not safe, but this act made a real reconciliation impossible. For the exercise of vengeance against Laud there was not yet time. He waited in prison for nearly four years, then (Jan. 1645) he was executed as mercilessly as his friend.

Meanwhile questions of religion were being discussed, and on these there was no such agreement as there was on constitutional questions. The extreme Puritans, more numerous in this Parliament than in any of its predecessors, were eager to change the whole constitution of the national Church. They had introduced early in the Parliament, a bill for the exclusion of the bishops from the House of Lords. They followed this up with a more vehement measure 'for the utter abolition of archbishops, bishops, deacons, archdeacons, prebendaries and canons,' which was known as the Root-and-Branch Bill. But there was a large section even in the Commons, and a still larger in the country, which felt a real devotion for the English Church, and would resist to the death any such change. A middle party, including many of the parliamentary leaders, had no objection to episcopacy in itself, but regarded the bishops as the most dangerous supporters of the royal prerogative, and on that ground, and also because they did not wish to alienate their staunchest adherents, they gave a half-unwilling support to these measures. The majority was thus against the bishops. The friends of episcopacy naturally tended to become a more solid party, and to take the king's side on all but fundamental constitutional questions.

Another profound cause of difference was also emerging. Now that the constitution had been defined, should the king be trusted to exercise the great powers which it still left to him, or must he be regarded with unaltered distrust, and must Parliament in effect assume charge of the executive government? Those who took the Anglican side in the Church controversy were for trusting the king. The leaders of the majority could not bring themselves to trust him, and their attitude made any real reconciliation impossible. Their distrust was not without grounds. Charles I. evidently held the view that he was not bound to keep faith with the foes of the Divine ordinance of monarchy. But besides this general ground of distrust there were several suspicious episodes during the first months of the Long Parliament. In May 1641 news leaked out of a foolish plot in the army, which still lay in the north: most of the officers were royalist, and there was talk of their marching on London. Though the plot came to nothing, the most was made of it; it was the occasion for an Act forbidding the dissolution of this Parliament without its own consent—an Act which deprived the king of what he regarded as a fundamental prerogative. There were suspicions also about the king's intrigues in Scotland, which were heightened by rumours of a mysterious plot for killing or kidnapping the Earl of Argyll, leader of the extreme Presbyterian party in Scotland. The king denied all knowledge of it, but the parliamentary leaders believed themselves to be surrounded by a network of conspiracy.

But it was from Ireland that the bombshell came which in the event made a peaceable settlement impossible. It is noteworthy that as Scotland had precipitated the constitutional struggle, so Ireland drove it into its most crucial stage. Strafford had made himself complete master in Ireland, but he had aroused many resentments, and his plan of a plantation in Connaught had awakened all the rankling memories of earlier plantations; his sudden fall inevitably produced restlessness, and the disbandment of the Irish army, which was naturally demanded by the English Parliament, made the situation dangerous. During the parliamentary crisis the king, who still hoped for help from Ireland, had negotiated with some of the Catholic leaders, especially the Anglo-Irish lords of the Pale, and had held out the hope of toleration for the Catholics in return for assistance. But while many of the Lords of the Pale were strong royalists and loyal to the English connexion, the mass of Irish

Catholics were not content to trust to vague promises; and they knew that if the Puritans won the upper hand, they would have still crueller masters than before. They organised an insurrection which broke out in October 1641. The leaders claimed to be acting for the king, and displayed a forged commission with the royal seal of Scotland, which may have been torn from an old charter. A rising in a country so full of bitter memories and old resentments as Ireland could not possibly be peaceful and orderly, and in many parts of the country, notably in Ulster, there were scenes of carnage in which women and children were massacred as well as men. Probably some four or five thousand lost their lives by slaughter at the outbreak of the rebellion, and perhaps twice as many by starvation and other hardships. In England the atrocities were inevitably multiplied by rumour: men talked of as many as two hundred thousand having been slain by Irish savagery, egged on by the machinations of Rome.

When the news of the Irish rebellion reached London there was no difference of opinion as to the need for prompt and severe vengeance. An army must be raised, and Ireland must be reconquered. But who should command the army? That, under the laws of England, was for the king to decide. But the king was already suspected of being in relations with some of the Irish leaders: Ireland was the country from which Strafford had meant to draw the forces which were to crush resistance in England. Could the king safely be given the disposal of an English army, and a free hand to deal with the Irish problem? The question raised in an acute form the issue of confidence or no confidence in the king. It raised also the issue of control over the army, which became acute a little later.

On 8th November 1641, John Pym introduced in the House of Commons a formidable document, known as the Grand Remonstrance, which definitely and in clean-cut terms raised the question of confidence in the king. In strong language of the most partisan character every unconstitutional act of the reign was set forth, and every action of Parliament was vindicated as necessary. A stormy debate followed, in which the party now definitely to be called Royalist showed its strength. The Grand Remonstrance was only carried amid tumult by 159 votes to 148. The House, united at its first meeting, was now divided, like the nation into two almost equal parties; and the stronger

party was prepared to disregard all opposition and to make no compromise. 'If the Remonstrance had been rejected,' said Cromwell, 'I would have sold all I had the next morning, and never have seen England any more.' From this moment civil war was inevitable. The next step was the introduction of a Militia Bill, providing for the nomination by Parliament of a Lord-general and a Lord-admiral having the fullest authority over all the forces by land and sea: thus depriving the king of a power which all his predecessors had invariably exercised.

Too late, in January 1642, Charles decided to take parliamentary leaders as his ministers. He chose the chiefs of the royalist party, as was natural. They had voted for and they still loyally accepted all the constitutional enactments of the first session. But they were now simply party leaders, and the party feud was all but irreconcilable.

It was made quite irreconcilable when the king, hearing that it was proposed to impeach the queen, resolved to turn the tables on his enemies by impeaching the chief of them on a charge of overturning the constitution, and of treasonable relations with the Scots. Certainly Pym and his fellows had come nearer to 'levying war against the king' than ever Strafford had done. But when the king himself came down to the House with a band of excited young royalists to arrest Pym, Hampden, Hazlerigg, Holles and Strode, his action was tantamount to a declaration of war. He did not succeed in his aim. The five members were never arrested: perhaps that is why this episode is called the Arrest of the Five Members. They escaped to the protection of the City of London, whence they returned two days later, escorted by the trained bands of the city and by four thousand freeholders who had come up from Buckinghamshire to defend Hampden. Six weeks later the queen left England with the crown jewels; and the king set out for York. The final breach had come (March 1642).

The king was followed (June) by a document, drawn up by Parliament, which made the issues in dispute plain beyond a doubt. The Nineteen Propositions which formed this parting manifesto of the majority in the House of Commons had nothing to say about government without Parliament, or unparliamentary taxation, or prerogative courts. All these points were already safely won. The Propositions may be summarised in one: that Parliament and no longer the king was to be responsible for the executive government of England. Parliament was to approve the appoint-

ments of all ministers of state, chief justices, and members of the Privy Council. Parliament was to regulate the education and the marriages of the king's children. Parliament was to decide which peers should be allowed to sit and vote in the House of Lords. Parliament was to determine the liturgy and government of the Church. Parliament was to control all military forces and fortresses.

These proposals were not a defence of ancient liberties based on precedent. They were the proclamation of a revolutionary change, and many might reasonably doubt whether a large and shifting body like Parliament could directly exercise such powers with efficiency. Such a revolution a large part of the English people was unprepared to accept, though it had willingly accepted the clear definition of a 'limited' and constitutional monarchy which had been embodied in the early Acts of the Long Parliament. The issue could only be decided by arms, and the appeal to arms lets loose all sorts of unpredictable forces.

[Trevelyan's or Montague's books as for last chapter, also Gardiner, Ranke, Hallam, and Gardiner's *Constitutional Documents* Masson's *Life of Milton* (7 vols.) is not merely a biography, but a history of the period of great value. Hutton's *English Church from Charles I. to Anne*]

CHAPTER VI

CIVIL WAR IN THE ISLANDS

(A.D. 1642-1649)

§ 1. *The Situation at the Outbreak of War.*

DURING the next seven years and more, civil war raged intermittently in all parts of the islands ; and hand in hand with civil war went revolution, in a succession of those sweeping changes which a general upheaval always brings. It is the only period of violent revolution in the modern history of the islands. Like most sweeping changes brought about by force, the changes of these years were short-lived ; but they left behind them ideas and grievances which worked like yeast for a long time to come, and helped to shape the destiny of the islands and of the commonwealth.

Civil war had already led, in Scotland, to the complete victory of the popular party and of the Presbyterian Church, whose doctrine and discipline were established and enforced with a rigidity that knew no tolerance. But the dominant party, headed by the Earl of Argyll and the ministers of the Kirk, were convinced that the security of their triumph depended upon the issue of the conflict in England. On the other hand, there was a party which, while it accepted the Covenant and the Presbyterian system, was still royalist in politics, sympathised with the king in the English struggle, and would have been glad to help him. The chief member of this party was the brilliant and chivalrous Earl (later Marquis) of Montrose—he was to make in the later stages of the war a daring venture on the king's behalf, which very nearly won success.

In Ireland civil war was already raging when the struggle in England broke out, and it continued to rage throughout the whole course of the English war. It was a very confused struggle. The Irish Catholics held about three-fifths of the country, and in the summer of 1642 they provided themselves with a national organisation by creating a representative assembly, with a managing council, at Kilkenny. They professed loyalty to the king, but demanded

a free Parliament and complete freedom for the Roman Catholic religion, which the king dared not grant, and did not wish to grant. But their military affairs were very ill-managed: they never came near the complete victory that ought to have been within their grasp. The royalist army under the Earl of Ormond, with the aid of some troops from England, held them at bay in Leinster; other royalist forces held out in Munster; and in Ulster the Scottish settlers, having recovered from the first shock of the rebellion, and being helped by a small army from Scotland, more or less held their own. Thus there were three parties in Ireland: the Nationalists, the Royalists under Ormond, and the Scots, who were inclined to sympathise with the parliamentary side in the English conflict. The details of the dreary struggle in Ireland cannot here be recorded; but it must be remembered that it was going on, and that its fluctuations had at various points an important bearing upon the English struggle; that was the main struggle, since the fortunes of both Scotland and Ireland must depend upon whether king or Parliament won.

It was a very real civil war which began in England when, in August 1642, the king raised his standard at Nottingham; for every class and every district in the country was divided. Even fathers and sons took opposite sides, and sometimes met in battle; and there were separate little wars in almost every district,¹ which make it very difficult to get a clear view of the whole. It was not a conflict between class and class. Three-quarters of the peers, indeed, stood by the king; and, although only about one-third of the members of the House of Commons followed him, he had a substantial majority among the country gentlemen. Yet all the leaders, on the parliamentary side equally with the king's side, were either peers or country gentlemen. In some regions, notably the east and south-east, the bulk of the yeomanry were stalwart on the parliamentary side; but this was not so in the greater part of the country. Everywhere, even in regions generally loyal to the king, most of the trading classes were strong parliamentarians. This class formed, indeed, the backbone of that party. Wherever there was a substantial town, there was a parliamentary stronghold; and the staunchness of the London trained bands, and the bold resistance of towns like Hull, Leeds, Manchester, Glou-

¹ There are some good accounts of the war as it affected special counties or towns. English students will find it interesting to study the war in their own counties.

cester and Plymouth, alone prevented a royalist victory during the first two years of the war. Yet in every town there was a royalist party: even in London it was estimated that one-third of the population favoured the king. And there were large elements of the population—some even of the peers, many country gentry, and a very large proportion of the humbler classes—who stood aloof as far as possible, either because they were indifferent to this conflict of principles, or because they were torn asunder by divided sympathies. Both sides had to resort to impressment to fill their ranks, though there was never more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ *per cent.* of the population under arms—a figure which may be compared with the 15 *per cent.* enrolled during the great war against Germany. In the later stages of the war large numbers of men formed themselves into bands to keep both parties away from their part of the country, and these ‘clubmen,’ as they were called, caused difficulty to the generals on both sides. Only a limited portion of the English population was, in truth, as yet sufficiently awakened from the routine of custom to know or care much about even such fundamental questions as the war was fought to decide. This vast mass of indifference, resentful of interference with its habits, was a factor of which statesmen had to take account. It was wholly unready for any sweeping changes, and especially for any high-handed interference with its customary modes of life; a fact which passionate reformers were apt to neglect when they spoke of ‘the people’ as demanding the acceptance of principles which they themselves loved with the devotion of parents.

Geographically the lines of division were clearer: ¹ Parliament controlled the south and east, from the Wash to the Solent; the king was strongest in the north and the west; the Midlands were divided. But each party had many adherents in the regions dominated by the other. Even in the south-east, upon which the king never succeeded in making any impression, the ‘second civil war’ of 1648 showed that there were thousands of royalist adherents.

Parliament possessed great advantages at the opening of the struggle; it controlled the richest and most populous part of the country, and, holding practically all the ports, it had all the shipping of the country in its hands, enjoyed the whole profit of import duties, and shut off the king from easy communication with the Continent. This advantage

¹ See the map, Atlas, Plate 38 (a).

was increased by the fact that the Navy early declared for the parliamentary side: this enabled troops to be easily moved, and communication to be maintained with important ports like Hull. The raising of funds was thus relatively easy for the Parliament. Though it was loth to levy new taxes because of the discontent they caused, and found that the trading classes were not eager to pay it was gradually driven to make great innovations in the system of taxation. In this respect its work was lasting, and England broke away from the outworn fiscal system of the Middle Ages. The king, on the other hand, always found great difficulty in raising money. He had to rely mainly upon gifts from his followers, many of whom gave ungrudgingly, and permanently impoverished their family fortunes. His one great advantage was that the gentry, the majority of whom adhered to him, formed, with their grooms and keepers, excellent fighting material, especially as cavalry—far better than Parliament could command, until it ceased to rely upon volunteers and half-trained militia, and created a professional army. The superior dash and confidence of the king's men very nearly gave him the victory in the first two years of the war. On both sides, but especially on the parliamentary side, the infantry had a way of melting, even after a victory.

§ 2 *The First Three Campaigns*

In the short campaign of 1642, the royalists won considerable advantages. The main royal army in the Midlands, after an indecisive battle at Edgehill (October), took Oxford, which remained the king's headquarters throughout the war, and for a time seriously threatened London; the cavaliers of the north, under Newcastle, threatened to overwhelm the parliamentarians under Fairfax, whose strength rested on the 'woollen' towns of the West Riding, and on Hull, and in the far south-west Hopton won the upper hand for the king in Devon and Cornwall. During the next year, 1643, these advantages were pressed home. In the north, Fairfax was badly beaten at Adwalton Moor, and penned into Hull, in the south-west the main parliamentary army was shattered. Bristol was captured by Prince Rupert, and it was only the resistance of the towns of Plymouth and Gloucester which prevented the triumphant royalists of this region from linking up with the main armies in the Midlands. Gloucester was hard beset; its

relief by a parliamentary army in September probably saved the parliamentarians from disaster.

Only in one region was there a gleam of success for the parliamentary cause. In the east the counties grouped together in the Eastern Association were better organised than other districts; and as part of the army of the Eastern Association Oliver Cromwell¹ had begun the creation of a new kind of fighting force. He had realised the futility of trusting to the ill-disciplined levies upon which Parliament relied against the dash and fury of the Cavalier gentlemen; and during the first winter he had raised a regiment of horse, taking only men who were in earnest about the cause. He trained them thoroughly; he armed them well; he saw that they were regularly paid; and he insisted on the strictest discipline. This regiment may be called the first body of professional soldiers engaged in the war. But it was more than that. It was a body of enthusiasts, and it was soon to prove that under good leadership such a force was all but irresistible, and deserved the name of 'Ironsides,' which Prince Rupert later gave to its leader. Already in 1643 Cromwell and his men had played a chief part in the conquest of Lincolnshire by the parliamentary forces of the Eastern counties; he was now second in command and predominant in influence and authority in that army, through which the method and example of his own regiment was steadily spreading.

At the end of 1643 both sides began to look about for allies. The king sought aid from Ireland. He empowered Ormond to arrange a cessation of arms for a year with the Catholic rebels, and to open negotiations for a settlement which might bring all Ireland over to his side. No settlement could be reached, because the Catholics demanded higher terms than the king could give. But at least the 'cessation' enabled part of Ormond's army to be drafted over to England; it was landed in Cheshire, but achieved nothing and was destroyed in January 1644. Charles gained nothing from Ireland, but public discredit for having treated with the rebels.

Parliament, on the other hand, sought for aid from the Scots, and the dominant party in Scotland, alarmed at the prospect of a complete royalist victory, were ready to give it, on one condition: that the Presbyterian system of Church government, on the Scottish model, should be established in England and eventually in Ireland also.

¹ For all this see Firth's *Life of Cromwell* and his *Cromwell's Army*.

The taking of the Covenant was made an indispensable condition of the alliance. The majority in Parliament, now purged of all its Anglican members, was inclined to the Presbyterian view, and had already abolished episcopacy and invited an assembly of Puritan divines to meet at Westminster, to advise it upon the reorganisation of the national Church in administration, creed and order of service. But Parliament was far from wishing to set up a Church so independent of the State, and wielding so wide an authority over the lives of private men, as the Scots had established, and many of its members feared and disliked the rigidity and intolerance of the Scottish system. In face of the danger of a royalist victory, however, these misgivings had to be disregarded, and in September 1643 the Solemn League and Covenant was accepted and sworn to by both sides. This committed Parliament to impose upon England a Presbyterian system with all its rigid discipline.

The Westminster Assembly of Divines was strengthened by the addition of some Scottish representatives, and during the next four years it continued to sit and draft schemes of Church government, a directory of public worship, and a creed and catechism. But Parliament did not allow to the Assembly of Divines any such freedom of action as the General Assembly enjoyed in Scotland. It asked from them only 'humble advice,' it made substantial modifications in their proposals, and it insisted upon maintaining the control of the State over the Church. In the eyes of the Scots this was the deadly heresy of Erastianism, and it strained the friendship of the allies from the first. Nevertheless a Presbyterian organisation of the Church was devised and approved, and in the following years was partially applied in England. Above all, the Assembly of Divines drew up a Confession of Faith, rigidly Calvinistic in character, as well as two catechisms—these, though they were never widely used in England, were adopted in Scotland, and became—especially the Shorter Catechism—supremely important factors in the education of the Scottish people. Whatever may be said in criticism of the Shorter Catechism, it challenged those who had to study it to think about great questions. Its first question, 'What is man's chief end?' stands in sharp contrast with the trite and obvious 'What is your name?' of the English Church Catechism. Its second question, 'What is God?' is even more tremendous. The Scottish people is a people whose

children have for more than two centuries been daily challenged by these profound inquiries.

The intervention of the Scots, which resulted from the Solemn League and Covenant, was the decisive factor in the campaign of 1644.¹ Their invasion of the north broke Newcastle's power there, and drove him to take refuge in York. Prince Rupert had to hurry northward from the Midlands to relieve him. On the other hand, the parliamentary army of the Eastern Counties, with Cromwell in command of its cavalry, came north to join the Scots and the Yorkshire levies under Fairfax; and a big pitched battle, the most important of the war in regard to the number of men engaged, was fought at Marston Moor in July 1644. It ended in a complete royalist defeat, though at the beginning it seemed to be going in favour of the cavaliers. The decisive factor in the fighting was the steadiness and fighting power of Cromwell's horse, and the skill with which he handled them. Marston Moor was in truth the turning point of the war. It lost to the king the whole of Northern England, which during the next two years was completely subjugated by the Scottish army and the local parliamentary forces: he now had to fight on two fronts.²

Nevertheless the king's cause did not yet seem hopeless. For everywhere else the aristocratic generals on the parliamentary side acted with a nerveless indecision which prevented them from doing any damage to the king. The only excuse for them was that their troops were untrustworthy; but some of them were also half-hearted. 'If we beat the king ninety-nine times,' said the Earl of Manchester, Cromwell's superior officer in the army of the Eastern Association, 'yet he is king still, and so will his posterity be after him; but if the king beat us once we shall all be hanged, and our posterity made slaves.' That was scarcely the temper which makes for victory.

Meanwhile, in the late summer of 1644, the gallant Marquis of Montrose³ had raised the king's standard in the Highlands of Scotland. He appealed specially to the hatred of the clan Campbell and their chief, the Earl of Argyll, which was widely felt among the clans of the Western Highlands: now that Argyll, as the head of the Kirk party, dominated the government of Scotland, the Macdonalds and other clans dreaded the use he might make of his power in their

¹ Compare the two maps in Atlas, Plate 38.

² *Ibid.*

³ See Morris's or Terry's *Montrose*.

own wild country. Helped by a small contingent from Ireland, but relying mainly upon the valour of the clansmen, Montrose marched through the Highlands,¹ growing stronger at every stage, and avoiding two of the armies that were closing down upon him, crushed the third at Tippermuir near Perth (September 1644), and occupied the town. Later he captured Aberdeen, and in the depths of winter he burst into the Campbell country, burning and slaying. The avalanche was ready to descend into the Lowlands in the next campaign. The king's cause was looking up in Scotland. In Ireland also negotiations were being carried on for a peace with the Catholic rebels which would bring them into the field on the king's side. These negotiations did not come to anything definite till the next year, when they were too late, but the knowledge that they were going on made the situation serious.

§ 3 *The Professional Army, and the Downfall of the Royalist Cause*

In spite of the victory of Marston Moor, therefore, things looked by no means bright for the Parliament in the autumn of 1644. Negotiations with the king were attempted, but they came to nothing. It was by other means that the deadlock was to be solved. During the winter very plain words were spoken in Parliament about the half-heartedness and incompetence of the army chiefs, and the inefficiency of the forces under their command. The plainest of all were spoken by Oliver Cromwell, who had a good right to speak, since his troops were the most efficient on either side, and his leadership had always led to success when he had a free hand. He complained that there were too many politicians in the army. 'If the army be not put into another method,' he bluntly said, 'and the war more vigorously prosecuted, the people can bear the war no longer, and will enforce you to a dishonourable peace.'

Cromwell was regarded with deep distrust in many quarters. His regiment was notoriously full of Independents and all kinds of sectaries enemies (in the eyes of the orthodox) of all fixed and decent order, and especially of the Presbyterian system. Their influence was spreading through the army of the Eastern Association, and good Presbyterian chaplains had been shocked by the freedom and boldness of their ideas. Cromwell did nothing to check them, but

¹ See the map of Scotland, Atlas, Plate 40 (a).

rather encouraged them, on the plea that so long as his men were good fighters and zealous for the cause all was well. He was suspected of being himself ill-disposed to the Presbyterian system, though he had taken the Covenant, and of being inclined to the noxious system of toleration, which would be an end of all decency and good order. The Scots in particular distrusted him.

But on the military question the soundness of Cromwell's position could not be refuted. Parliament agreed to a self-denying ordinance, which in its final form required every member of both houses to resign all military offices, but left it open for any of them to be subsequently appointed. Parliament also decided to reorganise the bulk of the army on a professional basis, and no longer to trust to levies of trained bands or militia. Sir Thomas Fairfax, who had taken no part in politics but had shown himself an able captain, was appointed Commander-in-Chief; Skippon, who had a good deal of professional experience on the Continent, was made Major-General to deal with questions of organisation; and Cromwell was later appointed second-in-command. But it was to him that the new army, from the beginning of its reconstruction, looked up as its real leader. He now held a position of commanding influence; for he was not only one of the principal army chiefs, he was also the only officer who sat in Parliament, and was a member of the Committee of Both Kingdoms for the conduct of the war.

The new model army¹ was only beginning its organisation, and was full of raw recruits, when it was called upon, in June 1645, to deal with an unexpected concentration of royalist forces in the Midlands, which threatened an attack upon the hitherto inviolate area of the Eastern Association. Fairfax hurried up to meet the king; and battle was joined at Naseby, Cromwell commanding the parliamentary cavalry. The battle was a confused one, and at first went badly against the parliament men. But, as at Marston Moor, the valour and steadfastness of Cromwell's horse turned the day. The royalists were completely broken, and nearly five thousand prisoners, all the king's baggage and artillery, and all his private papers, fell into the hands of the victors. Fresh from this crushing victory, the new model army turned upon the royalists of the south-west, hitherto almost unbrokenly successful; and in July, at the battle of Langport, near Bridgewater, shattered that army also.

¹ For the military methods of the Civil War see Firth's *Cromwell's Army*.

Naseby and Langport between them ruined the royalist cause. The next year was occupied in the gradual subjugation of those parts of the country in which the royalists still held out¹—a slow and difficult task in which the New Model repeatedly displayed its efficiency. When Oxford, the king's headquarters, capitulated in June 1646 the civil war in England was for the time being at an end, the king after a good deal of hesitation, put himself into the hands of the Scots at Newark; and the problem of settlement after all this upheaval had to be faced.

Meanwhile the hopes which had been raised by Montrose's early successes in Scotland had been raised higher still, only to be dashed to the ground. In the spring of 1645 he was still marching about the Highlands and winning victories over every force sent against him. In August (two months after Naseby) he broke down into the Lowlands, and in a brilliant attack at Kilsyth broke the main Covenanting force, giving no quarter. Kilsyth seemed to put all Scotland at his feet: he summoned in the king's name a meeting of the Scottish Parliament at Glasgow, and hoped to invade England with a great host. But his Highland followers melted away as soon as they had won their victory, to take their plunder home. They left him with only twelve hundred men to meet the forces which were hurried back from the Scottish army in England. Within a month of his triumph at Kilsyth his little army was annihilated at Philiphaugh, and Montrose fled abroad, to gather strength for a new desperate onslaught. The king's hopes from Scotland, as from England, had come to naught.

In despair, the king had already made a last attempt to enlist the help of the Irish Catholics. In August 1645—after Naseby and Langport—he sent the English Catholic, Lord Glamorgan, with full powers to make an agreement—almost any agreement—which would range Irish armies on his side. But concessions which would have been welcomed, and would have ensured Irish loyalty, a few years earlier, were now insufficient. A papal legate, Rinuccini, had arrived in Ireland, and made himself the dominant factor in the counsels of the Kilkenny assembly, and being bent primarily upon securing a complete triumph for Roman Catholicism, he insisted upon stiffening the terms. Glamorgan got a promise of ten thousand men, but only on condition that all penal laws against the Catholics should

¹ See the map, Atlas, Plate 38 (b)

be rescinded, that all churches and abbeys then in Catholic possession should remain Catholic, and that a free Parliament should be summoned, no longer bound by Poynings' Act, which made it subject to the English and Irish Privy Councils. This would have made Ireland an independent State, linked to England only by the Crown, and Roman Catholic. When the agreement became public, as it was bound to do, the indignation in England was great, not only among parliamentarians, but among the king's followers. Ormond himself, the head of the king's party in Ireland, refused to sanction it. And meanwhile the force whose aid it was to purchase had been made useless by the parliamentary victories in England: it could not even be transported, since every English port was in parliamentarian hands. Too late the Irish Catholic leaders resolved to ratify the peace without the religious clauses, trusting to the king's gratitude for concessions. They had to override Rinuccini and the clerical party to reach this decision, which in any case was of no avail.

For the victory of this moderate party was short-lived. In June 1646 Owen Roe O'Neill, head of the Catholic forces in Ulster, almost annihilated the Scots of the north in the battle of Benburb, the one considerable victory won by the Catholics during the war. This victory restored the ascendancy of Rinuccini and the Catholic stalwarts. They renounced the peace and the cessation of arms, and began a big attack on Dublin (November 1646). Ormond, whose forces had been depleted, had no alternative, if English supremacy in Ireland was to be maintained, but to hand over the city to Parliament. A very able parliamentary general, Michael Jones, was sent over to take command; and, not content with defence, he sallied forth, joined forces with the garrison of Drogheda, fell upon the main Catholic army at Dangan Hill, near Trim, and almost exterminated it (August 1647). A little later the Munster Protestants inflicted an almost equally severe blow upon the Catholics in that province, and George Monk,¹ sent across to organise the resistance in Ulster, brought to a stop the Catholic successes in that province also. The Catholic insurrection was not yet by any means quelled. But its chance of complete victory had been broken, and it remained for a parliamentary army to subjugate the country thoroughly.

¹ There is a life of Monk by Julian Corbett, in the English Men of Action Series.

§ 4 *Attempts to find a Settlement*

During these later stages of the Irish troubles, there was going on in England and Scotland a prolonged and complex series of negotiations and intrigues in preparation for the settlement of the great issues, religious and political, about which the war had been fought. The king had gone to the Scots, because he knew there were jealousies between them and the parliamentary leaders. But though the Scots were not pleased with the hesitations of Parliament about Presbyterianism, and were ready to give large political powers to the king if he would consent to leave their Church free and triumphant, they were not ready for a breach with Parliament, and the king was not ready to accept their terms. It was obvious that his aim was to create dissensions, not to come to a frank and definite conclusion. He believed that he was indispensable, and that by playing off against one another the various parties among the wicked men who had defied the ordinances of Heaven the cause of righteousness, as he understood it, might yet come to its own. Haunted by this belief, he carried on during the next two years a series of intrigues, often skilful, whose chief effect was to convince each party in turn that he was not to be trusted. No other conclusion seemed possible. For the truth seems to be that Charles, utterly sincere in his belief in the divine ordination of his power, and regarding those who opposed him as enemies of the truth, did genuinely believe that he was justified in deceiving such men, and had no serious intention of arriving at a lasting settlement of the questions in dispute, on any basis that conflicted with his doctrines. The first result of this attitude of mind was that the Scots, after eight months, gave up negotiating in despair. They wanted to get home, Parliament wanted them to go, and in February 1647, having received the arrears of their pay, they went leaving the king in the hands of Parliament.

The king did not yet give up hopes of the Scots. But during the next twelve months he found a new field for his gifts of intrigue in the rising hostility between Parliament and the army. Parliament was bent upon a purely Presbyterian settlement of the Church, though (to the vexation of the Scots) they insisted upon keeping it in subordination to the State, on the political side they wanted to restore the king, but to leave him in all essentials entirely dependent upon themselves. But in the army—which felt that it, and

not Parliament, had won the war—a very different set of views prevailed.

The new army, because of its professional character, was linked together by a strong *esprit de corps*. Moreover, as it had been joined especially by the men of most independent minds and greatest force of character, it had become a centre of unceasing discussions upon the profound religious and political problems which the long controversy had raised; and as the fullest freedom had been given, especially through Cromwell's influence, to all this discussion, there was an immense variety of religious opinions represented in this strange host. The various sects got along together very well in the army; why, the soldiers were tempted to ask, should variety of opinion not be equally permitted in the community? They stood for the rights of private judgment, and were resolved not to submit to the rigid regulations of a Presbyterian system. 'New presbyter was but old priest writ large'; the war of religious liberty would have been fought in vain if rigid Presbyterianism were to be its outcome. It is true, few of them were prepared to grant full toleration to Roman Catholics or to Anglicans, but that was because these creeds were held to be politically dangerous. In spite of that, the arguing soldiers of this strange army were almost the first strong advocates of religious toleration, and of full freedom of thought and speech, in the modern world. Their heresy shocked orthodox opinion. 'We detest and abhor the much endeavoured toleration,' declared a meeting of London ministers; and, again, 'if the devil had his choice whether the hierarchy, ceremonies and liturgy should be established in the kingdom, or a toleration granted, he would choose a toleration.'

Yet more remarkable were the political opinions which had grown up in the soldiers' discussions. They made little of the 'inherited liberties' and the precedents to which parliamentarians attached so much weight, but took their stand on abstract principles. Many of them, who bore the name of 'Levellers,' had worked out a complete doctrine of democracy; a handful had even the theory of Socialism. The apostle of the Levellers was John Lilburn, who was in some ways an anticipator of Rousseau. The sovereignty of the people as the one foundation of government was their principle. 'Every man born in England, the poor man, the meanest man,' ought to have a voice in choosing those who made the laws; and in a document

which they called the Agreement of the People (who had not been consulted, and certainly did not agree) they demanded biennial parliaments, equal constituencies and manhood suffrage. Had their demands been granted, the first elections would have returned a huge majority in favour of restoring his authority to the king.

It is not surprising that Parliament should have been anxious to get rid of a body so formidable, which held views of this character. Since the war was over, the army must disband—or be shipped to Ireland, to deal with the rebels there. But the army refused to disband. Parliament had given it a legitimate grievance by letting its pay fall into arrears, and besides that, the army was growing to the conviction that since God had called it to decide the war it was its duty also to see that the settlement was a right one. It took to electing ‘agitators,’ two for each regiment, to represent its grievances, it demanded and enforced the expulsion of eleven members of Parliament, leaders of the rigid Presbyterian party (June 1647).

Between these two conflicting views of the Parliament and the army, daily getting further apart, stood Cromwell. He was the army's trusted leader—the only man who could control it. But he was also a member of Parliament and of what may be called the War Cabinet, the Committee of Both Kingdoms. In one essential thing his feelings were all with the army. He had, in strenuous wrestlings won his own way to his own belief, and for him religious freedom was the greatest of all things, and the threatened tyranny of Presbytery even worse than that of Laud. But he was no sour fanatic. A jovial man, very familiar with his soldiers and fond of a jest, they tell how a grave discussion between him and one of his generals in these anxious months suddenly developed into a pillow-fight. His greatness showed in nothing more than this, that he was never the captive of formulae and theories, however plausible, and that he had always a sense of realities, and a firm loyalty to facts. He did not very much care even about forms of Church government, but would have accepted a moderate Episcopacy or a moderate Presbytery if either could be combined with a real toleration of differences. Nor did he greatly care about forms of government. ‘he was not wedded or glued to forms of government,’ he said. On the whole he thought that monarchy was the best form in England, under due safeguards, both because, as a soldier, he saw the need of a strong and accepted authority at the centre of things,

and still more because the most important thing to consider in any proposals was 'whether the spirit and temper of the people of this nation are prepared to go along with it,' and 'the people of this nation,' he knew, were used to the name and authority of the king. Above all he hated the idea of imposing any settlement, however well-seeming in itself by mere force. 'What we gain in a free way is better than twice as much in a forced way, and will be more truly ours and our posterity's. That you have by force I look upon as nothing. I do not know that force is to be used, *except we cannot get what is for the good of the kingdom without it*' The exception was fatal. It drove him to use force in the end, and the good that he aimed at was lost for that reason. In the meantime his hesitations almost lost him the confidence of his soldiers.

These were the factors which the unhappy king thought to play off one against the other, parleying with them all, and meaning to come to a real agreement with none. The army took possession of his person (June 1647), and offered him terms—terms far more generous than either the Scots or the Parliament would offer. They were embodied in the Heads of Proposals, drawn up by Cromwell's right-hand man, Ireton. There was to be a moderate Episcopacy, combined with all-round toleration, a new Parliament, elected by equal electoral districts on a wide franchise, and lasting for two years, and a Council of State, appointed in the first instance by agreement. It was a statesmanlike proposal, and workable. But Charles discussed it only as a means of dividing his enemies. All the time he was in touch with Parliament, and also with the Scots, who were becoming restive at the lack of respect with which their Scottish king was being handled, and were almost ready to interfere on his behalf, there was also secret work going on among the English royalists, and hopes of aid from abroad.

§ 5. *Solution by the Sword*

Suddenly Charles slipped away from his lenient and respectful army gaolers, and took refuge in the Isle of Wight (November 1647). Within a few months a royalist revolt had broken out in South Wales, which Cromwell had to deal with, and another in Kent and Essex, which gave some trouble to Fairfax, part of the fleet revolted and went over to the royalists, and before long the more royalist party among the Scottish Presbyterians had got the upper

hand, and a Scottish army was pouring over the border to help the king (July), just four years after they had come to help the Parliament. The parliamentary forces in the north had to fall back, but Cromwell came up with reinforcements, and, breaking through the hills from Yorkshire, bore down upon the straggling Scottish army as it advanced through Lancashire, routed it at Preston (August 1648) and cut it off from its base, and finished it off at Wigan and Warrington.

These incidents are called the 'second civil war'. The first civil war had been honourably distinguished by the humanity with which it was conducted on both sides. In the second there was a much more merciless temper. The army was losing its patience. It lost it still more fully when, the danger over, Parliament and the king began again upon the old Penelope's web of negotiations and the arrangement called the Newport Treaty was under discussion. Not the rank and file only, but the heads of the army, with the exception of Fairfax, had come to the conclusion that the time for patience and argument had gone, even before setting out for the campaign. 'we came to a very clear resolution that it was our duty, if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stewart, that man of blood, to an account for the blood he had shed'. On November 20, 1648, the army sent Parliament a remonstrance, demanding the rupture of negotiations with the king, and his punishment 'as the author of all our troubles'. Cromwell too had now been brought to this conclusion. His hesitations and willingness for compromise were over, he had ceased to be afraid of 'force', and he was a man who, once his mind was made up, never wavered in carrying out his resolve.

But first Parliament must be dealt with. When it resolved to continue negotiations with the king, Colonel Pride and a party of musketeers came down and excluded all but fifty or sixty members (December 1648). Cromwell would have preferred a forcible dissolution and a new election, but he accepted the accomplished fact, and devoted himself to driving through the arraignment and trial of the king.

In William Rufus' great hall at Westminster, which had witnessed so many events in English history, on the 10th of January 1649, a scene took place the like of which had never taken place in England, or in any other country. An anointed king was arraigned before a body of judges empowered to try him for his life on a charge of treason against

the nation. No law known to Englishmen justified such an act. Those who conducted it were not judges of the realm, but an *ex parte* body appointed for the purpose, whose decision was determined beforehand. Those who appointed them were not representatives of the nation, but the remnant of an assembly which, even before it was purged, had long ceased to be representative. The king, who bore himself with a quiet dignity which became him better than any other act of his life, refused throughout to recognise the authority of the court, and declined to plead. But he made it plain that, standing before a court which was no court, it was he, now, who was the defender of the rudiments of justice and of law against mere brute force and arbitrary power. 'It is not my case alone, it is the freedom and liberty of the people of England. . . . For if power without law may make laws . . . I do not know what subject he is in England that can be sure of his life or anything that he calls his own. . . .'

He was sentenced, as was indeed determined: he was refused the right to speak, when he asked for it, after sentence given. But some even of his stern judges had to be kept to their duty by the iron will of Cromwell and his friends, and outside a sort of horror held the nation. On January 30, on a cold frosty morning, the heir of a hundred kings stepped forth from the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall on to a black-draped platform, where, near a low block, stood two masked men in close-fitting frocks. Ranks of soldiers stood around, horse and foot, and behind them, and in all the windows and on all the roofs, a thronging mass of silent men and women. The king spoke to those near about him, stating his view of the causes of the war. 'For the people,' he went on, 'I desire their liberty and freedom as much as anybody whatsoever: but I must tell you that their liberty and freedom consists in having government, in those LAWS by which their life and goods may be most their own. It is not their having a share in government; that is nothing pertaining to them. . . . If I could have given way to have all changed according to the power of the sword, I needed not to have come here; and therefore I tell you (and I pray God it be not laid to your charge) that I am the martyr of the people.'

He lay down quietly, and lay for a moment praying; then stretched forth his hands, and the head was severed with one blow. It was raised for the people to see; whereupon one groan burst from the thousands round the scaffold:

'such a groan,' writes one who was present, 'as I never heard before, and desire I may never hear again'

A few days later was published a moving little book, called the *Eikon Basilike* or Royal Image. It purported to represent the thoughts and reflections of the doomed king in the last days of his life. Read by hundreds of thousands, it drove into the mind of the greater part of the nation the pity and horror which the scene at Whitehall had caused. The king's death had sanctified the cause of royalty, and identified it with justice against mere force.

Liberty rests upon law, as the king had said; and, for all his faults, he spoke truly when he made that clear. Mere force cannot make right; it may poison even a good cause. To this had come the revolution which started with the resolute insistence upon the sovereignty of law. With this augury the Puritan Republic started upon its short and troubled history.

[The standard history of the Civil War is S. R. Gardiner's, in four volumes. Clarendon's *History of the Great Rebellion* is one of the greatest pieces of English historical writing, it is also the work of a participator, on the royalist side. On the other side see Lucy Hutchinson's *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson* and Ludlow's *Memoirs*, also Carlyle's *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*. For the more advanced movements Pease's *Leveller Movement*, Simpkinson's *Harrison*, and Brown's *Fifth Monarchists*]

CHAPTER VII

THE PURITAN REPUBLIC AND THE PROTECTORATE

(A D 1649-1658)

§ 1 *The Situation in 1649*

THE execution of the king was a sudden and violent breach with the traditions of English government, the breach was made yet more complete when the surviving fragment of the House of Commons proceeded to declare, by its own sole authority, the abolition of the monarchy and of the House of Lords (February 1649). Of the traditional organs of government which the nation was accustomed to obey, and whose existence was implied in the rules and practices of every law court and every administrative body in the land, nothing now remained save the House of Commons, which ten years earlier had seemed to be the least indispensable part of the system, and the name and authority of the House of Commons were arrogated by a usurping minority, who excluded the majority from their places, and depended for their own existence solely upon the support of the army—that is to say, upon brute force.

Yet this body, which had assumed to itself all the functions of government and exercised a power more irresponsible and tyrannical than any English king had ever enjoyed, based its claims upon the assertion of the principle of popular sovereignty and upon its own representative character. 'England shall henceforth be governed as a Commonwealth or free State,' ran an Act passed in May 1649, 'by the supreme authority of this nation, the representatives of the people in Parliament', and the new Great Seal bore the legend—'In the first year of freedom by God's blessing restored'. What they meant by 'a free State,' the Parliament did not explain: since the king himself, on the scaffold, had claimed to be a martyr for the freedom of the State, it is evident that 'freedom' may have many different meanings. In the declaration of their reasons for proclaiming a republic, Parliament asserted that kings were only officials, established by the agreement of the people, who had the

right to dethrone them, and it tacitly assumed that it alone could speak for the people. John Milton, who became one of the secretaries of the Council of State, declared 'that all men were naturally born free,' and asserted that the 'contract' on which all governments rested was invalidated by misrule. These were lofty assertions of principle. But between them and the actual facts there was a very awkward contradiction; for the actual facts were that the new rulers of England were an irresponsible oligarchy, supported against a hostile nation only by military power, and that if they were to submit themselves to popular election and accept its results then power could not survive for a moment.

This contrast between the assertion of high democratic principles, and the impossibility of putting them into practice in a nation which was not ready to accept them and hated their advocates, stultified all the most enlightened acts of the Commonwealth, as the same contradiction has stultified one violent revolution after another. It brought it about that, in the search for a stable foundation for government, the revolutionaries, struggle as they might, found themselves forced, step by step, to return towards the old system, and in the end, of all the work of the Long Parliament, the only part that survived was that which was achieved in its first session, before brute force was adopted as an argument. The lessons of this experience long had very great weight in British politics.

This failure was not due to any lack of force or ability on the part of the republican government, for their actions were both vigorous and successful. In January 1649, they seemed to be in an almost hopeless and impossible position. The royalists, more than half of the active part of the nation, were then irreconcilable foes. They had definitely alienated the great mass of neutral and indifferent opinion, which became more and more hostile as men found themselves subject to an unprecedented burden of taxation, and interfered with in their ordinary habits of life. The Presbyterians, who formed much the greater part of the Puritan minority, especially in London and the towns, were almost as irreconcilable as the royalists, and were indeed becoming royalists themselves. Even among the very small minority of extreme Puritans there were deep divisions. Some condemned Pride's Purge and the king's execution as outrages against justice and liberty. On the other hand, some desired to establish 'the rule of the saints' and would have liked to limit the privileges of citizenship,

as in New England, to pious and orthodox Puritans of their own shade of belief. There were also genuinely democratic elements, especially in the army; these were indignant because new elections on a democratic basis were not at once held, and they sent demands in this sense to the Parliament. Some of them, like Lilburn, denounced Cromwell as a tyrant, an apostate and a hypocrite. They had to be firmly dealt with: 'break them or they will break you,' said Cromwell; and four of them were imprisoned in the Tower by the Council of State, quite as high-handedly as Charles I. and Laud had imprisoned their opponents, and with less show of legal right. In May 1649 there was an alarming mutiny in three regiments, but Fairfax and Cromwell dealt with it promptly, and shot three of the ring-leaders.

While the position of the new government was precarious in England, it was seriously threatened both from Scotland and from Ireland. The Scots, indignant at the illegal execution of a Scottish king, and at the overthrow of the Presbyterian cause in England, were already in treaty with Charles II., now in exile, who after much wriggling accepted the hard terms they imposed on him and landed in Scotland in the summer of 1650. In Ireland the king's execution changed the whole situation. The royalists, who had submitted to Parliament in 1647, raised their heads again, and Ormond made a league with the Catholics; even the Scots in the north would have nothing to do with the regicides. For a moment Ireland was a united nation, as she had never been before; the parliamentary garrisons fell one by one, until only Dublin was left, and Dublin was only preserved by the irrepressible vigour of Michael Jones, who saved it by striking at Rathmines (August 3, 1649) a lively blow against Ormond's attacking forces. A royalist fleet under Prince Rupert—the same which had revolted in 1648—was making its base at Kinsale; and Charles II. was expected to arrive in Ireland—was on his way, indeed, when Cromwell's victories made him turn towards Scotland instead.

On the Continent every State was hostile to the murderers of the king: and this was the more serious because the Thirty Years' War was now over, though war between France and Spain still continued. English envoys were murdered in Holland and Spain, almost with public approbation. There was a real possibility that some of the continental powers would help Charles II. to regain his throne. That was the condition of things in 1649. By 1652 all the

world had become respectful, and eager for English friendship. The contrast is the measure of the vigour and success of the new government and its army. But no vigour and no success could cure the fundamental falsity of their position.

§ 2 *The Security of the Republic Established*

The first danger to be dealt with was that of Ireland. On March 30, 1649, Cromwell was appointed Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief in Ireland. On August 13 (having previously sent reinforcements to Michael Jones) he landed at Dublin with twelve thousand men¹. He came with the fixed resolve not merely to remove a danger to the Commonwealth, but to wreak a terrible vengeance for 'the innocent blood that had been shed' in 1641, of which, like all his contemporaries, he had a wholly exaggerated view. He was to be 'the minister of God's justice'. He first turned northwards against Drogheda, one of the recent captures of the royalists, into which Ormond had thrown the flower of his army. The town was stormed on September 10, and the whole garrison put to the sword, together with every priest. Next he turned south against Wexford, where his action was almost as unflinching: fifteen hundred of the garrison and every priest were put to death. These merciless measures had then effect in creating terror. People, wrote Ormond, were 'so stupefied, that it is with great difficulty I can persuade them to act anything like men towards their own preservation'. Town after town surrendered, and Ormond's men deserted in droves. The spell was partly broken when the stubborn resistance of Waterford compelled the siege to be raised (November). But meanwhile the various elements in the Irish confederation had begun to quarrel. The royalists of Munster made terms, the Scots in the north also submitted. By the close of 1649 the whole coast from Londonderry to Cape Clear was in Cromwell's hands. The interior and the west had still to be reconquered, and reconquest of the fortresses in Munster and part of Leinster occupied him during the spring of 1650, while in the north another army won a series of successes. In May 1650, Cromwell was recalled to England. The final subjugation of Ireland could be left to his lieutenants, who carried it out systematically during the next two years. Galway the last place to resist, sur-

¹ For the Irish campaign see Atl., Plate 42 (b).

rendered in May 1652. A war which had lasted twelve years and desolated the country was at an end ; and thousands of Irishmen began to pour forth to take service in continental armies. Ireland was subjugated more completely than it had ever been under Elizabeth.

The cause of Cromwell's recall was that Charles II. had submitted to the terms dictated to him by the Scottish leaders, who were preparing to enforce his rights upon England, and at the same time to insist upon the carrying out of the Solemn League and Covenant. The gallant Montrose had indeed made, in March 1650, a desperate attempt to save his king from the abject position to which Argyll and the leaders of the Kirk insisted upon reducing him. He had landed in the Orkneys with a little body of Danish and German mercenaries. But his force had been destroyed at Carbisdale in Sutherland, and he himself had later been captured and handed over to the government, who hanged him at the market-cross in Edinburgh on a gallows thirty-eight feet high, and sent parts of his dismembered body to be displayed in various towns (May 1650). This was just about the time when Cromwell landed in England from Ireland. The Scots were preparing to invade England under Cromwell's old comrade in arms, David Leslie. Should they be allowed to do so, or be anticipated by an invasion of Scotland ? Fairfax, still Commander-in-Chief, resigned his post rather than invade Scotland ; and in June Cromwell became Captain-General and Commander-in-Chief of all the forces of the Commonwealth.

Following the east coast route, where the fleet could accompany and supply him, Cromwell led an army of sixteen thousand veterans to the attack against twenty-six thousand Scots.¹ At Dunbar, on September 3, 1650, he won perhaps the most brilliant of all his victories ; though he was helped by the meddling of the Scottish ministers who insisted upon overriding Leslie's plans : he was in a difficult position when the battle began, and if the ministers had not insisted on an immediate attack, Cromwell might have been beaten. Master now of all the eastern Lowlands, Cromwell was anxious for a peaceful agreement. But the Scots would not yield, and their army was re-forming behind Stirling, the gateway of the Highlands. The extreme Kirk party, who were most likely to make terms, had been discredited by their meddling at Dunbar, and had lost the upper hand, so that Charles II. had become more fully master in his own

¹ For the Scottish campaign see Atlas, Plate 38 (a).

house. To turn the Scottish position Cromwell threw his army into Fife, across the estuary of the Forth, and captured Perth. This cut off Leslie from the north, but it left open the road to the south; and, as Cromwell had foreseen, Charles II. and the Scots resolved to seize the chance for a raid into England, hoping to get aid from English royalists. They got practically none, so firmly was England held down. But they managed to advance with increasing difficulty as far as Worcester. Cromwell, who had gathered fresh forces during the pursuit, was able to bar the road to London; and having now nearly two to one against the weary and dispirited Scots, he attacked them from two sides at Worcester (September 3, 1651), and almost annihilated them. Scarcely any of them got home. Half the nobility of Scotland were among the prisoners. Charles II. had great difficulty in escaping: troopers scoured all roads, and notices were out at the ports for the arrest of 'a tall man above two yards high' with dark hair. But for seven weeks the fugitive wandered about the country in every kind of humble disguise; of the scores he trusted not one proved false, and he escaped to France at the end of October. The romance of Charles II.'s escape, added to the tragedy of his father's death, contributed to increase the hold of the fallen monarchy over the imaginations of the English people.

Dunbar and Worcester completed the triumph of the republic. Scotland, like England and Ireland, now lay helpless before the army. She had suffered fearfully during the last years of the war, and she could not replace the army destroyed at Worcester. A force of six thousand under George Monk was sufficient to conquer the remainder of the country. In May 1652 (the same month in which the surrender of Galway ended the Irish war) Dunnottar Castle, the last Scottish fortress to hold out, also surrendered. Scotland and Ireland, both conquered countries, were at the disposal of the able and vigorous oligarchy who ruled England against its will.

Meanwhile Rupert had been swept from the seas; and a war with the Dutch, of which something will be said elsewhere,¹ showed that the republic was as vigorous on sea as on land, and that in Blake it had a sea warrior not unworthy to be the colleague in arms of Cromwell. And while these victories were being won, the administrative work of the Commonwealth was carried on with almost

¹ Chapter VIII. below, p. 478.

equal efficiency, through a Council of State of forty-one members, thirty-one of whom were members of Parliament. Beyond question these men were honest and disinterested. 'They are economical in their private affairs,' wrote a French agent, 'and prodigal in their devotion to public affairs. They handle large sums of money, which they administer honestly. They reward well and punish severely.' They raised a revenue of £2,000,000 a year, three times as great as Charles I. had enjoyed before the meeting of the Long Parliament. Much of it was raised by heavy fines on royalists and by the sale of confiscated estates; but the burden of direct and indirect taxation was heavier than it had ever been, and more arbitrarily collected. It was the army and the navy which necessitated this large expenditure, despite careful economy. They were able and devoted men who carried on all this work. One of the ablest of them was Sir Henry Vane; another, more famous, was John Milton, one of the secretaries of the Council of State, and the chief defender of the republic in the pamphlet war of the time.

In addition to their other labours, Parliament undertook great reforms. They took in hand the reorganisation of the Church; and, largely guided by the Puritan divine, John Owen, wrought out (1652) a system whereunder all candidates for the ministry were examined by local commissions, partly lay and partly clerical, and admitted freely, whatever their shade of belief, Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist, or even moderate Anglican; while a travelling commission moved about ejecting unfit ministers and schoolmasters. Beyond question the work was carefully done, and most of the parishes were served during this period by able and honest men. At the same time toleration was granted to all who could not accept the regular ministrations, provided that they accepted certain fundamentals of Christianity. In the same spirit a reform of the legal system was begun. Twenty-one commissioners, presided over by Matthew Hale, being empowered 'to consider the inconveniences of the law and the speediest way to remedy the same,' drafted many good bills, some of which became law during the Protectorate and lasted till the Restoration: others had to wait till the nineteenth century.

But not even the greatest efficiency and devotion could overcome the fundamental vice of the government of the Rump, as the remnant of the Long Parliament was called.

They claimed to represent the nation, but they represented only a fraction of it ; and even that fraction, even the army on which their whole power rested, was not content to accept an unchanging oligarchy with no legal basis for its power.

§ 3. *The Attempt to find a New System of Government.*

All through the three years following the death of Charles I. agitation went on about the problem of government. It came to a head when the subjugation of Ireland and Scotland removed the immediate dangers of the republic. Now at last, it might seem, the discrepancy between theory and practice might safely be removed. But the Rump was slow to abandon a power which it enjoyed exercising ; also its members knew, better than many of the enthusiastic democrats who criticised them, that any attempt to translate theory into practice would lead to chaos. The most that the Rump would do was to propose that the present house should continue, the members not submitting to re-election, but that vacancies should be filled up, the existing Parliament being the judge of the eligibility of all persons elected. And this system they proposed as a permanency.

The army lost patience ; and Cromwell, acting as their agent, came down to the house (April 20, 1653), when the bill for renewing the Rump was about to pass, and, after listening to the debate, got up and roundly rated his fellow members : ' You are no Parliament, I say you are no Parliament. I will put an end to your sitting.' Soldiers of his own regiment were called in : the members were excluded ; the Speaker and the rigid republican Algernon Sidney were removed with a show of force. Catching sight of the mace, the emblem of the legal authority of Parliament, ' What shall we do with this bauble ? ' he cried, and then, calling a soldier, ' Here, take it away.' So ended the last semblance of legal authority in England. Bare, naked force alone maintained the State in existence.

What should take the place of the disbanded house ? What was to be the new frame of the government of England ? That was for Cromwell and his soldiers to decide ; there was no other authority in England. A free appeal to the electorate was out of the question. But among the leading soldiers there were two views, and Cromwell swayed between the two. One was the view of Lambert, the most political of the soldiers. He held that a Parliament should be

elected, that there should also be a small administrative council, and that their respective powers, and also the permanence of the whole system, should be defended by a written constitution, from which there should be no appeal. This seemed the only safeguard against the obstinate persistence of the traditions of the old constitution. The other view was represented by Harrison, a brave man but an illiterate fanatic, leader of the Fifth Monarchy men, who held that the four monarchies of Assyria, Persia, Macedonia and Rome having all fallen, the Fifth Monarchy, that of Christ, was now to begin. Their favourite text was, 'The saints shall take the kingdom and possess it'. There was a practical vein in Cromwell which made him distrust paper constitutions. There was also a mystical vein in him, to which the idea of the rule of the saints made some appeal. Ever since the execution of Charles I he had talked more than usual about God's judgments, which he saw in every victory.

The result was that an experiment was made in Harrison's direction. One hundred and forty persons, all Puritan notables, including five from Scotland and six from Ireland, were invited to become members of an assembly which was to undertake the rule of the Commonwealth. It is the assembly known from one of its members as Barebone's Parliament. Cromwell welcomed it (July 4 1653) in an extraordinary outburst of half-mystical enthusiasm. The rule of the saints had been brought about by the manifest guidance of God. 'I never looked to see such a thing as this. This may be the door to usher in the things that God hath promised and prophesied of. Indeed, I do think somewhat is at the door. We are at the threshold.'

But alas! The saints were not very practical rulers, though they did not go quite so far as the Fifth Monarchy men, who would have had them abolish all the laws of England and substitute the Mosaic code. They started to do everything at once, and put everything in confusion. And meanwhile the Levellers were denouncing Cromwell for not having called a real elected Parliament. The practical side of Cromwell's nature reasserted itself. There was a moderate party even in Barebone's Parliament. They held an early meeting (Dec. 12) before the enthusiasts could come, and hastily resolved that the further sitting of this Parliament 'will not be for the good of the Commonwealth, and that therefore it is requisite to deliver up to the Lord-General Cromwell the powers which they received from him'. Cromwell accepted the resignation with relief. The experi-

ment had lasted only five months and four days. But once more, no power in existence save the power of the sword.¹

The next attempt at a solution was Lambert's scheme of a written and unalterable constitution under which it might be safe to elect a Parliament. Lambert drafted the constitution, which was known as the *Instrument of Government*, and Cromwell accepted it. It was not a bad piece of constitution-making. But it is not hard to make a constitution: the difficulty is to make it part of the life of a nation. The striking feature of the Instrument was that it was obviously modelled upon the old constitution of England. It had 'something monarchical in it,' which Cromwell had always said was necessary, for there was to be a Protector at the head of the executive government performing very much the same duties as had fallen to the king, assisted by a Council of State which would correspond to the Privy Council and the Protector was to have a fixed yearly revenue with which Parliament was not to be able to interfere, sufficient to enable him to meet all the ordinary expenses of government—that had been Charles I's position in theory. Parliament was to meet once in three years (as the Long Parliament had defined) and might be dissolved after only five months: there was therefore to be no such permanent control of the executive by Parliament as the Long Parliament had desired. Moreover the powers of Parliament were limited: it was prohibited from passing laws that conflicted with the 'constitution,' which is just what Charles I had complained that his parliaments insisted upon doing. Before the meeting of Parliament the Protector was to have the power of issuing ordinances—just as the Stewarts had issued proclamations. Finally, as a safeguard the franchise was altered: in the counties, only owners of property worth £200 were to vote. This was far from the system desired by the Levellers.

Cromwell was solemnly installed as Protector in December 1653—dressed in a black coat, to show that military rule was over. Parliament did not meet till September 1654 and in the meanwhile Cromwell exercised freely his power of making ordinances. Some of the most distinctive parts of his domestic policy were thus effected without parliamentary concurrence. But when Parliament did meet the Protector found it as troublesome as ever Charles I had done. For the elected members felt that by the fact of election they had an authority behind them far superior to that upon which the Instrument of Government rested; and they

insisted upon revising its terms. Why should a junto of officers presume to tie for ever the hands of the representatives of the people? About 100 members were excluded for refusing to promise not to alter the main features of the system; Charles I. had never gone so far. But those who remained still went on with these discussions, and in particular proposed to reduce the size of the army. At the very earliest day permitted by the Instrument of Government—counting four weeks to the month—the Protector got rid of his Parliament as eagerly as ever did Charles I.

He was faced indeed by a threatened series of risings, which had been stimulated by the evidence that the conquerors were divided—risings of the Scots, of the Cavaliers, of the Levellers, of the Fifth Monarchy men: such a series of threats to government as Charles I. had never known even at the height of his personal rule, though he had had no army to overawe the country. They were all crushed in the bud, save a rising in Scotland and a little outbreak of Cavaliers in England, both of which were easily dealt with. But they gave excuse for an extension of military rule which brought more odium upon the Protectorate than any other of its acts. England was divided into ten districts, each of which was placed in charge of a major-general with elaborate powers of police investigation, and instructions to enforce the laws relating to public morals. The major-generals overrode in a large degree the whole system of local self-government, with which there had, hitherto, been no interference. They had military force at their command, and their expenses were paid by a ten per cent. income tax on the hard-pressed royalists. England got such a taste of autocratic military rule from the major-generals as she did not for a long time forget. She learnt to hate the very idea of a standing army.

To add to the troubles, the lawyers began to question the validity of Cromwell's ordinances, as Sir Edward Coke had once questioned the validity of the proceedings of the prerogative courts; and a merchant named Cony, imitating that once popular hero Bate, of Impositions fame, refused to pay customs duties not imposed by Parliament. More high-handed than James or Charles, but precisely in their manner, Cromwell replaced the obstinate judges by men who agreed with him, and locked Cony's lawyers up in the Tower. To this had come the movement which began by asserting the supremacy of law over mere power, the control of taxation by Parliament, the iniquity of arbitrary imprisonment, and

the independence of judges ! ' What is it you would have ? ' Cromwell once asked of the unbending republican Ludlow ' That which we fought for,' said Ludlow, ' that the nation might be governed by its own consent ' ' I am as much for government by consent as any man,' the Protector wearily answered. ' *But where shall we find that consent ?* '

There was the difficulty. It is not enough, for freedom, that you should desire things which you believe to be good, and use power for their enforcement. There must be consent, and consent is not easily given by the mass of unthinking men once the rules and methods to which they are accustomed have been overturned. Seeking still for the ' consent,' without which his rule for all its efficiency, was futile, Cromwell summoned another Parliament for 1656, still under the Instrument of Government—trusting to the major-generals to pack it with well-disposed members. What storms timid attempts in this direction had produced under James I ! But the major-generals were quite unsuccessful. Many opposition members were elected. Cromwell simply excluded a hundred of them. Even so, when Parliament met the major-generals were vigorously attacked, and the ten per cent tax on the royalists was condemned as an unjust breach of faith.

Whither the feelings of Parliament were tending was shown by the introduction of a resolution begging Cromwell to accept the crown. Even in this carefully chosen Puritan house, though there was no wish to bring back the Stuarts such as there was outside, and no personal hostility to Cromwell, such as was producing a whole series of plots against his life, there was a longing to get back to the old ways, to known laws, to easily understood traditional authority. In spite of republican opposition, a bill for the revision of the constitution and the revival of monarchy, under the name of the *Humble Petition and Advice* was carried by no less than two votes to one (March 1657). Cromwell was moved. Here was a prospect of some sort of ' consent.' ' It is time,' he said to his officers, ' to come to a settlement, and to lay aside arbitrary proceedings so unacceptable to the nation.' But the opposition of the army was too strong. Not without reluctance—a reluctance due not to personal ambition but to the longing for settlement and ' consent ' and the return to normal conditions—Cromwell refused to take the title of King. But he agreed to the establishment of a House of Lords nominated by himself, and in other respects to as near an approximation to the old system as

might be. He was once more installed as Protector (June 1657), this time wearing a robe of purple velvet and ermine, and the old-time heralds in their tabards made proclamation of his accession in the old-time way, to the sound of trumpets. At last he had got a constitutional basis for his power: he rested not upon the mandate of the army, but upon the election of Parliament.

But alas! the new constitution was as unworkable as the old. It was no longer possible to exclude members: the new constitution gave Parliament, like the parliaments of Charles I, control over its own membership. The excluded members returned, and Cromwell's own supporters were depleted by the appointment of many of them to the new second chamber. The house insisted upon discussing the new constitution all over again: why should it not? It quarrelled with the new second chamber: had not such a body long ago been declared unnecessary? And here it had the ominous support of the army. This unsettlement could not be permitted. Like Charles I when the Petition of Right Parliament challenged his authority, Cromwell came down and upbraided the Commons, and declared the Parliament dissolved (Feb. 1658). He never met a Parliament again. He had failed to get 'consent' and in the few months of life that still remained to him, he must have known that what he had striven for had failed.

We have dwelt especially upon this consistent failure of a highly efficient government to secure the public support without which it could not exist even with all its military strength, because this is indeed the most significant aspect of the history of the Commonwealth. It taught a lesson of permanent value: the lesson that in a community which has once acquired the habit of self-government no efficiency, not even the highest degree of enlightenment can achieve permanent success if it runs counter to the will and sentiment of the nation, if it does not win for itself 'consent'. Napoleon whose position was in many ways like that of Cromwell got the consent of France to a system even more arbitrary than Cromwell's, but only because the French people had not acquired the habit of self-government, which long practice had rooted in the English. Because it lacked this essential foundation, all the best work of the republic and the Protector was ephemeral, and had to be done over again: the only part of it which was lasting was the bad part, the part that created new or intensified old bitter-
nesses.

§ 4. *The Achievements of the Republic and the Protectorate*

Yet in some respects the work of this period was extraordinarily enlightened, and far ahead of its age. In two ways it made great contributions to the growth of freedom. The restriction upon printing which had been taken for granted as an essential power of government, not only in England but in almost all countries, ever since the invention of printing had broken down when the prerogative courts by which it was maintained were abolished in 1641, and it was never fully re-established. All through this period there was an unceasing stream of political writing, often extremely able, which contributed immensely to stimulate political thinking throughout the nation and largely accounted for the rapid development of ideas and theories which distinguished the period. Milton's noble tracts¹ are the only products of this activity which are still read, but Milton was only one of many. John Lilburn alone wrote about one hundred pamphlets, and these and other writings of his school largely anticipated the revolutionary thought of the eighteenth century. The political newspaper owes its origin to this period. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the importance of all this upon the mind of a nation already the most active politically of any in the world. And though there was a return to the old restrictions under the Restoration, the free press for which Milton so nobly pled had become so essential a thing in the minds of Englishmen that no restrictions were of any avail or lasted more than a generation.

Again both the Republic and the Protectorate made a real advance towards religious toleration, a cause for which Cromwell cared more than any other and on which Milton wrote some of his noblest verse and prose. It is true that Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism were both excepted from the full benefits of religious freedom on the ground that they were politically dangerous. But many Anglicans were allowed to retain their livings, and to use portions of the Prayer-book; many little congregations met in private houses, unmolested by government, even in London the use of Anglican services and ceremonies was winked at except when royalist plots were afoot. Even the Roman Catholics were less troubled than they had been and Cromwell could justly claim in a despatch to the French Government, that he had eased the situation for them. He would

¹ Especially *Areopagitica*, a sublime argument for a free press.

have gone further, but public opinion was too hostile. To the Jews also, and to the Quakers (whom the Rump had persecuted) he showed an unwonted indulgence; the return of the Jews to England, from which they had been banished since Edward I., dates from the Protectorate. The Instrument of Government and the Humble Petition and Advice both made a modified toleration a fundamental principle of their systems, and it was something that the idea should have been publicly recognised; and the Protector was yet more lenient than the laws. But perhaps the greatest contribution of the period to the growth of religious freedom was the mere fact of the creation of organised sects. Public opinion was slow to accept the idea of full toleration; no government could go far ahead of public opinion, and in the next period there was a great set-back. Yet even in the next period it was impossible to disregard the existence of the sects. They might be, and were, exposed to very serious restrictions, but they remained members of the community, and could not be crushed out. Henceforward the ideal of an enforced uniformity of practice and belief in a single national church became impracticable, and that fact in itself ensured the gradual growth of a real practice of toleration.

Not the least important of the achievements of this time, more especially under the Protectorate, was the attempt to reform the procedure of English law. The process had been begun by the Rump. Cromwell carried out a valuable series of reforms in the cumbrous procedure of the Court of Chancery, and endeavoured to get rid of the monstrous severities which disgraced the English criminal law. 'To see men lose their lives for petty matters,' he told Parliament, 'is a thing God will reckon; and I wish it may not be laid on the nation a day longer than you have opportunity to give a remedy.' But Cromwell's reforms were handicapped at the time by the resistance of the lawyers, who made difficulties about recognising his ordinances; they all disappeared at the Restoration, not having been made by a legal authority, and it was not until the nineteenth century that they were carried into effect.

The most remarkable political achievement of the republic was the complete union of Ireland and Scotland in a single State with England. Scottish and Irish members sat in each of the parliaments of the Protectorate, including Barebone's Parliament, and there was a close assimilation both of the ecclesiastical sys- of the legal system of both countries

to that of England. But the union was imposed by force, not attained by consent ; and this fact, which stultified all the achievements of the republic, destroyed the union also. It simply came to an end at the Restoration.

In Scotland there is no denying that justice was well and firmly administered, and that such order was maintained as Scotland had never known before : even the wild Highlands were tamed by garrisons. There was complete freedom of trade with England, from which the country undoubtedly profited : ' we always reckon those eight years of usurpation a time of great peace and prosperity,' wrote the Scottish historian Burnet. But the burden of taxes, though not unjustly apportioned, was heavy, and above all, every Scot felt that these boons were the gift of a foreign conqueror, and yielded no gratitude for them. All the changes in Scotland vanished at the Restoration. Here, again, good work was fruitless, because it was based on force.

If Scotland had grounds of resentment, far deeper were the resentments caused in Ireland by the policy of these years : ' the curse of Cromwell ' became one of the bitterest of Irish imprecations. Yet, tragically enough, Ireland was the only field of all Cromwell's manifold activities where his work has left a permanent and ineffaceable mark ; and this because his policy reflected the unhappy antipathies of his time, and carried them out with unflinching logic. Like all his contemporaries, Cromwell regarded Ireland not as a sister nation, but as a possession of England ; and here alone the advocate of religious toleration allowed his policy to be governed by religious venom. His aim was completely to Anglicise Ireland, by filling the country with godly Englishmen. The reconquest of the country, which was so thorough that it lay in his hands to be moulded, seemed to give him the chance of effecting this aim, by justifying a wholesale confiscation of all the landed property of the Irish Catholics, and rendering possible a scheme of colonisation more drastic than even Elizabeth or James I. or Wentworth had ever contemplated.

Cromwell tried to remove the whole Irish Catholic population to Connaught, and did almost succeed in limiting to that province Irish ownership of land. Two-thirds of the land of Ireland changed hands, and the process whereby the Irish were turned into hewers of wood and drawers of water on the land which their ancestors had owned was unflinchingly carried out, so far as irresistible power could achieve it. But the Irish population could not be ~~be~~ ^{driven} : they still re-

remained as labourers and tenants on the estates of others in all parts of the country. Within a generation the new settlers, among them many of Cromwell's old soldiers, had (despite all prohibitions) married Irish wives, and had children who became 'more Irish than the Irish,' and Catholic like their neighbours, everywhere save in Ulster. The spasmodic and ineffective religious persecution of the previous period was replaced by a systematic hunting down of priests, though no attempt was made to punish laymen for being Catholics or to force them to attend Protestant services. Cromwell hoped for much from missionary enterprise and assiduous preaching: he brought in many preachers, appealing to New England for recruits. His hope was wholly vain: Ireland remained staunchly Catholic, all the more because Catholicism had become the symbol of nationality.

Ireland, like Scotland, enjoyed under Cromwell's rule the advantage of complete freedom of trade with England, and profited from it; she enjoyed also the real benefit of a competent and cheap administration of justice. But these boons were nothing in comparison with the indelible crime of attempting to wipe out the traditions and customs of a whole nation, and the blunder of supposing that any nation of men with memories and imaginations could be treated 'as a clean paper' (to use Cromwell's phrase), on which the hand of a master might write whatever he desired. The Cromwellian policy in Ireland contributed enormously to the creation of that heritage of bitterness which has made the Irish problem almost insoluble. Here again, and here more than anywhere, force was proved to be no remedy.

[Trevelyan's and Montague's books, already referred to; Firth's *Life of Cromwell*; Carlyle's *Letters and Speeches of Cromwell*; Gardiner's *Cromwell's Place in History*, and his *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate*, with continuation by Firth; Masson's *Life of Milton*; Ranke's *History of England principally in the 17th Century*. For the constitutional devices of the time see Jenks' *Constitutional Experiments of the Commonwealth*. Gardiner's *Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution* gives the actual enactments. For Ireland, Dunlop's chapter in the *Cambridge Modern History* and his *Ireland under the Commonwealth*; for Scotland, Hume Brown and Lang.]

CHAPTER VIII

THE PURITAN REPUBLIC AND THE OUTER WORLD

§ 1 *Naval and Colonial Policy ; the Dutch War.*

THOUGH all the constitutional projects of the Puritan republic ended in failure, there was one of its achievements which was of supreme and lasting significance to the development of the whole British Commonwealth. It practically created the navy as a permanent, organised fighting force, and won for England a command of the highways of the sea which was never afterwards to be wholly lost, and which was to form one of the chief factors in the world-wide distribution of the British peoples and their institutions, and in the maintenance of their unity.

The sea war under Elizabeth had been carried on in the main by private adventurers. Even the fleet which defeated the Spanish Armada, though its backbone was provided by a few Queen's ships, consisted chiefly of private vessels, and its most famous captains were not officers of the navy, but private adventurers. The royal navy had never been strong enough to fight a big battle without the aid of merchant ships. Charles I. deserves the credit of having begun to build a fleet of war powerful enough to hold the seas by itself, and it was from ship-money that he drew the means for building it. Ship-money created the powerful fleet which went over to the parliamentary side at the beginning of the civil war, and by holding the seas helped to ensure the defeat of its creator. But the fleet under Charles I. and during the civil war was still ill-organised and ill-managed. The republic turned it into a magnificent fighting force, provided it with an efficient organisation, and doubled its numbers, no less than 207 ships were added to the navy during the eleven years from 1649. What is even more important, the rulers of the republic (notably Sir Henry Vane) did away with the old system which had left the management of the fleet to a Lord High Admiral of noble rank, and for the first time called into consultation

a group of experts and fighting seamen, the nucleus of the future Admiralty.

The managers of the navy found a sea-warrior of the highest quality in Robert Blake,¹ who had been a soldier till middle life, and yet ranks among the three or four greatest English admirals. There were others also who did valiant work—Ayscue and Penn and the amphibious Monk.² The Council of State was wise enough to take some of these men into counsel in regard to its building programme, its naval strategy, and the great reforms in the manning, victualling and pay of the fleet which it carried into effect.

What compelled the Rump to give its serious attention to the navy after the execution of Charles I. was that, in the first place, part of the fleet (only nine ships) had gone over to the royalist side in 1648, and was now, under Prince Rupert, doing great damage to trade and helping Ormond in Ireland; and, in the second place, that all the European powers were hostile, while some of them, notably France, were expressing their hostility by privateering at the expense of English merchant ships. Now that the Thirty Years' War was over, and the sons of the late king were welcomed abroad, even a foreign invasion did not seem out of the question; and the function of the navy in guarding the inviolate island became more obvious in face of a hostile world.

Blake's first task was to deal with the small royalist squadron under Prince Rupert. He drove them from their Irish base at Kinsale (1649). He blockaded them for seven months in Lisbon harbour (1650), when they took refuge there. In doing so, he had to defy Portugal, and he fought and sank a Portuguese fleet in the middle of a gale. Then he pursued Rupert into the Mediterranean and for the time being scattered his fleet there (1650). The blockade of Lisbon was the first systematic operation of the kind carried out on a large scale by the English navy; and the raid into the Mediterranean Sea for the first time displayed the flag of the English navy in these waters, where so many of its great exploits were to be achieved. These deeds did as much as Cromwell's victories to establish the prestige and the security of the new government. They made it plain that in the navy there was a force that must be reckoned with. The English navy, now a formidable standing force, had become a factor in European politics as never before.

¹ There is a good short life of Blake by David Hannay.

² See Corbett's *Monk* in the English Men of Action Series.

hopes of help from Spain were shattered, and that the port of Dunkirk passed into English possession. This continental possession was valued because 'it would be a bridle to the Dutch, and a door into the Continent.' But the ideas of British policy implied in this view were unsound and dangerous. Cromwell was tending toward a reversal of that policy of withdrawal from continental entanglements which had grown stronger ever since the loss of Calais, and the cession of Dunkirk to France (1662), for which Charles II. was later bitterly blamed, was in reality a wise step which saved England from pursuing a wholly false and destructive ambition. In another aspect, the war policy of Cromwell had unhappy results. By lending English strength for the overthrow of Spain, he helped to establish the overweening power of Louis XIV. of France, which in the next generation was to threaten the liberties of Europe.

It cannot be said that the views of the dominant Puritans upon the attitude which the islands should adopt in their relations with their neighbours showed any real insight or generosity of view. But they deserve credit for two great contributions to the building of the British Commonwealth. One was their recognition of the importance of the young settlements over the seas, and of the need for putting upon a sound basis their relations with the mother country, from whom they derived their traditions of freedom, and upon whom they must depend for security in their future development. The other was the organisation of the navy, the force which was in the future to be used not merely as Cromwell had used it, for forcible aggression, but for the defence of free institutions in new lands, and for the maintenance of the freedom of the seas.

[For naval development, Laird Clowes, *History of the British Navy*, and Oppenheim *Administration of the Royal Navy*, there is a good chapter on this period in the *Cambridge Modern History*, by J. R. Tanner. For contemporary European history, Wakeman, *Ascendancy of France*, and Abbott *Expansion of Europe*. For the colonial policy of the Protectorate, Igeon, *Short History of British Colonial Policy*, Hertz's *Old Colonial System*, and Beer's *Old Colonial System*, also Cunningham's *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*.]

CHAPTER IX

THE COLLAPSE OF THE PURITAN REPUBLIC

(A.D. 1658-1660)

THE artificial ascendancy of the Puritan minority could not long survive the death of the great man who had embodied many of its highest qualities, and held in check the extravagances to which it was prone; whose resolution had faced and conquered the worst emergencies; whose faith in his cause had triumphed over discouragements; whose inherent moderation and toleration of differences had saved the sects from wrecking themselves and their country. One of the greatest of Englishmen, Cromwell was in nothing so great, and in nothing so English, as in his firm grasp of realities and his readiness to face facts. That gift must have convinced him, before his death, that there could be no permanence in the system which he had spent himself to maintain, because it did not rest upon national consent, but upon force. The danger was that the irresistible power of the army and the navy might work great ills before it was overthrown. From this the islands were saved by the very rapidity with which the system broke up, owing to the internal discords which Cromwell alone had been able to hold in check.

The rapidity with which the government of the country swung back through all the changes of the last years showed how insecure were the foundations of Cromwell's government. He died on 3rd September 1658. He was at first quietly succeeded as Protector by his son Richard. But Richard was a civilian, and had no hold over the army. The army officers thought they could claim a practical independence; they demanded that Fleetwood, one of their number, should be made Commander-in-Chief and should control all appointments of officers, and, though this was not granted, it showed how dangerous the army was. The Parliament, which met in January 1659, recognised the new Protector, but a republican minority strenuously resisted, and betook itself to intrigues with the army chiefs. In April the generals demanded and obtained the dissolution of the

Parliament : in May they restored the Rump as it had been in 1652, without the Presbyterians excluded by Pride's Purge in 1648. The Rump at once declared the Protectorate abolished, and Richard Cromwell retired very willingly into private life, after a reign of eight months.

But the old quarrel between the Rump and the army once more broke out, especially on the question of army appointments, which the generals wished to keep in their own hands. At the same time, there were plans for widespread royalist risings. One of these, in Cheshire and Lancashire, was more or less serious, and the Earl of Derby for a moment seized Chester. But the army was strong enough to deal with these troubles ; the quarrel with Parliament was more serious. In October the Rump was once more expelled by the army. No government could stand which did not submit to army dictation. The generals nominated a Committee of Safety to carry on administration, and a sub-committee set to work to make yet another new constitution.

But these frequent revolutions not only disgusted and alarmed the nation, they introduced discord into the army itself. The Governor of Portsmouth pronounced for the restoration of Parliament, and troops sent to deal with him went over to his side. The army in Ireland also declared for Parliament. The fleet in the Downs took the same side. Above all, George Monk, the shrewd and able commander of the army in Scotland, prepared for open war on behalf of legal government against mere force. General Lambert, the most active spirit among the generals, was sent north to deal with him, but only wasted time in negotiations, and meanwhile Lambert's friends in London, taking fright, had once more recalled the Rump, which promptly summoned Monk to London to protect it. The forces of the army were hopelessly split.

Meanwhile, throughout the country, there were wide demands for the next step to be taken in the undoing of the work of the last ten years. All the legislation of the Protectorate had been swept away : it remained to undo Pride's Purge, and bring back the excluded Presbyterians. London was almost in rebellion when Monk arrived at the beginning of February. A week after his arrival Monk declared for the restoration of the excluded members. Thus the Long Parliament of the civil war was restored. It assumed control at the end of February 1660 ; declared that everything done since Pride's Purge (including, of course, the execution of Charles I.) had been illegal ; re-established the Presby-

terian system, and the Solemn League and Covenant, thus returning to 1643; decreed the election of a new Parliament; and dissolved in March, after an existence of nearly twenty years.

The new Parliament was elected on the old basis, and, of course, represented England only. It was later known as the Convention, because it had not been regularly summoned by the king. The majority of its members were Presbyterians, but it included also a large number of Anglicans. But both alike were definitely Royalist in politics. The remnants of the House of Lords, though unsummoned, met at the same time. Meanwhile Monk had opened private negotiations with Charles II., who issued from Breda a declaration promising his consent to an Act giving liberty to tender consciences, a general pardon, and the payment of arrears to the army. A royal messenger came with a letter from Charles to Parliament embodying these terms. He was received with deference, and on May 1st both houses resolved that, 'according to the ancient and fundamental laws of the kingdom,' the government is and ought to be by King, Lords, and Commons. On May 8th Charles II. was proclaimed king with all the ancient ceremonial. Thus, easily and suddenly, the Puritan republic collapsed. The long nightmare of rule by force, the long breach with the orderly and law-abiding methods of English government, were over and done with.

Solemn deputations to invite the king to return went over to Holland. On the 24th of May Charles II. landed at Dover. On the 29th he rode into London from Rochester, through twenty-five miles of exultant cheering multitudes, rejoicing as if for the coming of an angel of goodness. So crowded were the streets of London with happy citizens in their best clothes that it took seven hours for the procession to reach Whitehall, where, in the Banqueting Hall from which his father had stepped out to the scaffold, the Lords and Commons were assembled to greet the new king with humble and fervent welcomes. To the rule of this good-natured voluptuary, simply because he stood for the old ways and the old laws, there was an eager 'consent' such as Cromwell had never been able to attain at the moment of his highest success.

The Puritan Revolution was over. But though all the formal changes of law for which so much blood had been shed were undone, and though England had gone back, in form, to 1640, nothing could undo the influence which the

stern temper of the Puritans had wielded, and was still to wield, upon the fortunes of the British Commonwealth. The sects might henceforth be a persecuted remnant, but they remained, solidly organised bodies of opinion, as strong to endure as they had been unflinching in action. The idea of a nation all believing the same doctrines and worshipping in the same forms was henceforth patently unrealisable, always henceforward there were large bodies of men who formed a visible contradiction of this idea. As sectaries, standing invincibly for their own distinctive conceptions of life and truth the Puritans were able to render far greater services to their country and to freedom than they could ever have done had they succeeded in their aim of imposing these conceptions upon the whole nation. Always they were there to protest against dominant orthodoxies, in politics as well as in religion.

Moreover something of their spirit, something of the best aspect of it, its ever-present sense of responsibility to God for the use of power, its readiness to test political action by higher standards than those of expediency extended in the coming generations far beyond the limits of the sects, and became one of the preservative elements in the public life of England. If the continuing tradition of Puritanism has caused some narrowness in English life, and still more in Scottish life, it has beyond all question been a source of strength far more than of weakness.

And by way of reaction, also the Puritan Revolution left indelible marks upon English life and institutions. It produced an unquenchable fear of the rule of force, which took for a long time an exaggerated form in the distrust of standing armies. It intensified the ancient habit of respect for law as such, and of unwillingness to resort to any but constitutional and legal means of changing even bad laws. It rooted the belief that even the noblest and the most enlightened aims are vitiated and will eventually be frustrated if those who advocate them try to secure their victory by force, and not by discussion and persuasion. These were to be henceforth the characteristic notes of the growth of free institutions in the British Commonwealth. Revolution by violence, even for the highest ends had been condemned by experience. It was not only the reign of the Stewarts that was restored in 1660, it was the Reign of Law.

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